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The works of Isaac Barrow

THE

WORKS

OF

ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

ABRAHAM HILL,

AND

A MEMOIR,

BY

JAMES HAMILTON,

WITH THE

NOTES AND REFERENCES CAREFULLY REVISED;

AND

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BARROW'S WORKS.

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SERMONS.

SERMON LXII.

OF SELF-CONFIDENCE, SELF-COMPLACENCE, SELF-WILL, AND SELF-INTEREST.

2 Tim. iii. 2.—*For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.*

OF SELF-CONFIDENCE.

II. Another like culpable kind of self-love is that of *self-confidence;* when men beyond reason, and without regard unto God's providence, do rely upon themselves and their own abilities, imagining that, without God's direction and help, by the contrivances of their own wit and discretion, by the prevalency of their own strength and courage, by their industrious care, resolution, and activity, they can compass any design, they can attain any good, they can arrive to the utmost of their desires, and become sufficiently happy;* not considering, that of God (*in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind*)[a] all our being and all our ability do absolutely depend; that he manageth and turneth all things, dispensing success according to his pleasure; that no good thing can be performed without the supply and succour of his grace, nothing can be achieved without the concurrence of his providence; that, *the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;* that *the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord;*[b] that, although, *a man's heart deviseth his way, yet the Lord directeth his steps;* that *no king is saved by the multitude of an host, a mighty man is not delivered by much strength, a horse is a vain thing for safety; The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;*[c] that (as St. Paul, one abundantly furnished with abilities suiting his designs as any man can be, doth acknowledge) *we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing, but our sufficiency is of God:*[d] these oracles of truth, and even dictates of reason, no less than principles of religion, they consider not, who confide in their own abilities, with which nature or fortune do seem to have furnished them.

This is that instance of self-love, which the Wise Man biddeth us to beware of: *Trust* (saith he) *in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*[e] This is that which he condemneth as foolish, and opposite to wise proceeding: *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool; but whoso walketh wisely shall be delivered.*[f]

This is that which smothereth devotion, and keepeth men from having recourse to God; while they think it needless to ask for that which they have in their power, or have means of obtaining;* this consequently depriveth them of di-

* Ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ,
Ἢ γλῶσσαν ἢν οὐκ ἄλλος ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχειν,
Οὗτοι διαπτυχθέντες ὤφθησαν κενοί.
Soph. Antig.

* ——æquum mi animum ipse parabo.

[a] Dan. v. 23; Job xii. 10.
[b] Jer. x. 23; Prov. xvi. 1, 9; xix. 21; xx. 24.
[c] Psal. xxxiii. 16, 17; Eccles. ix. 11.
[d] 2 Cor. iii. 5; ii. 16.
[e] Prov. iii. 5, 6.
[f] Prov. xxviii. 26.

vine aid, which is afforded only to those who seek it, and confide therein.

This often engageth men to attempt things rashly, and causeth them to come off unhappily; God interposing to cross them, with purpose to cure their error, or confound their presumption.

From hence, if God ever suffereth their attempt to prosper, they sacrilegiously and profanely arrogate to themselves the success, *sacrificing to their own net*, and saying with him in the prophet, *By the strength of my hand have I done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent.*[g]

This causeth most men to fail of true content here, and of happiness finally; while taking them to be, where they are not, at home, within their own hand or reach, they neglect to search after them abroad, there where they only do lie, in the hand and disposal of God.

OF SELF-COMPLACENCE.

III. A like act of blameable self-love is *self-complacence*, that is, greatly delighting in one's self, or in the goods which he fancieth himself to enjoy, or in the works which he performeth; when men, in contemplation of their works and achievements, go strutting about, and saying with that vain prince, *Is not this great Babylon that I have built?*[h] when, reflecting on their possessions, they applaud and bless themselves, like the *rich man* in the gospel, *Soul* (saith he, looking upon his accumulated store), *thou hast much goods laid up for many years.*[i] Such vain soliloquies do men ordinarily make! Thou hast (saith a man to himself) rare endowments of soul; a wonderful skill and ability in this and that matter; thou art master of excellent things; thou hast managed very important business, hast accomplished hard designs, hast achieved brave feats, with great dexterity and admirable success, by thy wit and industry; thou hast framed and vented very curious orations, very facetious speeches, very nervous and pithy discourses; thou hast put obligations upon this man and that; thou hast got much credit and interest amongst men; the world much looketh on thee, loveth and prizeth thee hugely, resoundeth with thy fame and praise: surely thy worth is notable, thy deserts are egregious; how happy art thou in being such a person, in performing such things, in enjoying such advantages! Thus with a spurious and filthy pleasure do men reflect upon and revolve in their minds the goods they deem themselves to possess, and the favourable occurrences that seem to befall them; being fond of their own qualities and deeds as of their children, which, however they are in themselves, do always appear handsome and towardly unto them; any little thing is great and eminent, any ordinary thing is rare, any indifferent thing is excellent to them, because it is theirs; out of any thing, how dry and insipid soever it is in itself, they suck a vain and foolish pleasure.

Hence is that honest and pure delight which they should taste in faith and love toward God, in the hope of future celestial things, in the enjoyment of spiritual blessings, in the conscience of virtuous practice, quite choked or greatly damped.

Hence also that hearty contrition and sober sadness, which, by reflection upon their great defects and frequent miscarriages, they should continually maintain in their souls, is utterly stifled.

Hence also that charitable complacency in the welfare, and condolency with the adversities of their brethren, is suppressed; hence cannot they be satisfied with any thing done by others, they cannot apprehend the worthy deserts, they cannot render due commendation to the good deeds of their neighbour; for while men are so pleased with their own imaginary felicities, they cannot well discern, they will not be duly affected with, the real advantages or disasters of themselves or of others.

OF SELF-WILL.

IV. Another culpable kind of self-love is *self-will* (αὐθάδεια, pleasing one's self in his choice, and proceeding without or against reason;) when a man unaccountably or unreasonably, with obstinate resolution, pursueth any course offensive to others or prejudicial to himself, so that he will not hearken to any advice, nor yield to any consideration diverting him from his purpose, but putteth off all with a—

[g] Habak. i. 16; Isa. x. 13.
[h] Dan. iv. 30. [i] Luke xii. 19.

Stat pro ratione voluntas: Say what you can, let what will come on it, I will do as I please, I will proceed in my own way; so I am resolved, so it shall be.*

This is that generally which produceth in men the wilful commission of sin, although apparently contrary to their own interest and welfare, depriving them of the best goods, bringing on them most heavy mischiefs; this causeth them irreclaimably to persist in impenitence. Hence they do stop their ears against wholesome counsel; they harden their hearts against most pathetical and softening discourses: they *withdraw their shoulder; they stiffen their neck* against all sober precepts, admonitions, and reproofs;[j] they defeat all means and methods of correction; they will not hear God commanding, entreating, promising, threatening, encouraging, chastising; they will not regard the advices and reprehensions of friends; the most apparent consequences of damage, disgrace, pain, perdition, upon their ill courses, would not stir them; their will is impregnable against the most powerful attempts to win and better them: let all the wisdom in the world solicit them, with a *Turn at my reproof;* it shall have occasion to complain, *They would none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof.*[k]

This is that also more particularly, which breedeth so much mischief to the public, which pestereth and disturbeth private conversation: this maketh conversation harsh, and friendship intolerable.†

Hence are men in their demeanour so peevish and froward, so perverse and cross-grained, so stiff and stubborn;‡ with much inconvenience to others, and commonly with more to themselves.

Hence will they not submit to the commands of their superiors, they will not comply with the customs of their country, they will not be complaisant in conversation; but every where raise factious oppositions, kindle fierce contentions, maintain disorderly singularities: they care not how for enjoying their humour they break the peace of the world, they disturb the order of things, they create tumults and troubles in any society, they bring vexations and mischiefs on others, on themselves: they do not consider or value the great harm they bring upon the public, nor how much themselves do suffer by it; so they have their will, what if the state be plunged into confusion and trouble; what if their neighbours be sorely incommoded; what if themselves lose their ease and pleasure?

It must be just as they will have it: what if ten to one think otherwise; what if generally the wisest men are agreed to the contrary; what if the most pressing necessity of affairs do not admit it; what if public authority (those whom all equity doth constitute judges, and to whom God himself hath committed the arbitration thereof) do not allow it? yet so it must be, because they fancy it, otherwise they will not be quiet: so do they sacrifice the greatest benefits of society (public order and peace, mutual love and friendship, common safety and prosperity) to their private will and humour.

This is that which St. Paul so often did forbid in word, and discountenanced in practice: for the edification of others, to procure advantage to his endeavours, to shun offence, to preserve concord and amity, he waived pleasing his own desire and fancy, he complied with the conceits and humours even of those who were most ignorant and weak in judgment; he even subjected and *enslaved* himself to the pleasure of others, directing us to do the like. *We then* (saith he) *that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves: let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself:*[l] (he adjoineth the great example of our Lord to enforce his own.) Again: *Give none offence* (saith he), *even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved: Be*

* Περὶ ὧν ἂν ἅπαξ τι εἴπω, μηκέτι με αὖθις πόθῃ. —Nero apud Dion. Cass.

Οἱ ἀμαθεῖς ἰσχυρογνώμονες.—Synes. Calv. *Vide* Sen. Ep. 23, de Ben. 438, Arr. ii. 15.

† —— τούτῳ δ' ἀνδρὶ μήτ' εἶην φίλος,
Μήτε ξυνείην, ὅστις αὐτάρκη φρονεῖν
Πέποιθε, δούλους τοὺς φίλους ἡγούμενος.
Eurip.

‡ Αὐθάδεια ἐρημία ξένοικος.—Plat. ad Dionem. Ep. 4

[j] Neh. ix. 28; Jer. vii. 26; v. 3; Deut. xxxi. 27; Prov. i. 25.

[k] Prov. i. 23, 25, 29.

Rom. xv. 1, 2, 3.

ye (herein) *followers of me, as I am of Christ:*[m] and again, *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some: Though I be free from all men* (that is, although I have no superior that can command me, or oblige me in these matters), *yet have I made myself servant to all, that I might gain the more.*[n] What this excellent person was in this instance of managing ecclesiastical discipline, and promoting the gospel, that, both in the same cases, and in the prosecution of all other designs, in all our conversation and practice, should we likewise be.

We should in no case indulge our own humour or fancy, but ever look to the reason of the thing, and act accordingly, whatever it requireth.

We should never act without striving with competent application of mind to discern clearly some reason why we act; and from observing the dictates of that reason, no unaccountable cause should pervert us: blind will, headstrong inclination, impetuous passion, should never guide, or draw, or drive us to any thing; for this is not to act like a man, but as a beast, or rather worse than a beast; for beasts operate by a blind instinct indeed, but such as is planted in them by a superior wisdom, unerringly directing them to a pursuit of their true good: but man is left *in manu concilii sui*, is obliged (under sore penalties) not to follow blind inclinations or instinct;[o] but to act with serious deliberation and choice, to observe explicit rules and resolutions of reason.[p]

OF SELF-INTEREST.

V. Another culpable sort of self-love is that of *self-interest;*[q] when men inordinately or immoderately do covet and strive to procure for themselves these worldly goods, merely because profitable or pleasant to themselves, not considering or regarding the good of others, according to the rules of justice, of humanity, of Christian charity; when their affections, their cares, their endeavours, do mainly tend to the advancement, advantage, or delight of themselves; they little caring what cometh on it, who loseth, who suffereth thereby.

They look upon themselves as if they were all the world, and no man beside concerned therein, or considerable to them; that the good state of things is to be measured by their condition; that all is well, if they do prosper and thrive; all is ill, if they are disappointed in their desires and projects.

The good of no man, not of their brethren, not of their friends, not of their country, doth come with them under consideration; what scandals do arise, what disorders are committed, what mischiefs are caused, they matter not, if they get somewhat thereby: what if the church or state be reproached, what if the neighbourhood be offended or disturbed, what if the world cry out and complain, if they become richer by it, or have their passion gratified, or find some pleasure in it?

This is the chief spring of injustice; for from hence it is, that oftentimes men regard not what courses they take, what means they use (how unjust, how base soever they be), toward the compassing their designs; hence they trample upon right, they violate all laws and rules of conscience, they falsify their trusts, they betray their friends, they supplant their neighbour, they flatter and collogue, they wind about and shuffle any way, they detract from the worth and virtue of any man, they forge and vent odious slanders, they commit any sort of wrong and outrage, they (without regard or remorse) do any thing which seemeth to further their design.

This is the great source of uncharitableness; for from hence men affect no man otherwise than he seemeth able to serve their turn; the poor, therefore, is ever slighted and neglected by them as unserviceable; the rich only is minded and respected as capable to promote their ends; they become hard-hearted toward others, not considering or commiserating their case; they will part with nothing from themselves to those who need their relief; they delight in nothing which doth not make for their advantage; all

[m] 1 Cor. x. 33; xi. 1.
[n] 1 Cor. ix. 22, 19.
[o] Wisd. i. 12; Deut. xxx. 19.
[p] 1 Cor. x. 24.
[q] *Vide* Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 25.

their shows of friendship and respect are mercenary, and mere trade; they do nothing *gratis*, or for love.

This is the great root of all the disorders and mischiefs in the world; this self-love prompteth men to those turbulent scramblings and scufflings, whereby good order is confounded; this engageth them to desert their stations, to transgress their bounds, to invade and encroach upon others with fraud and violence: did men with any conscionable moderation mind and pursue their own private interest, all those fierce animosities, those fiery contentions, those *bitter emulations*, those rancorous grudges, those calumnious supplantings, those perfidious cozenages, those outrageous violences, those factious confederacies, those seditious murmurings and tumultuous clamours, would vanish and cease; self-interest it is that gives life and nourishment to all such practices, the which embroil the world in discord and disorder. It is not out of pure madness or wanton humour that commonly men engage themselves and others in those base and troublesome courses, but out of design to get by it;* hope of gain to be raked out of public ruins and disorders is the principle that moveth them, the reward they propound to themselves for their pains in meddling, toward the promoting them; like those who set fire on the town, that they may get opportunity to rifle and pillage.

He that taketh himself to be as but one man (naturally like and equal to others), conceiving that he ought to consider the interest and right of other men in the same rank with his own, that he in reason should be contented with that share which ariseth to him by fair means;† who thence resolveth to be satisfied with his own lot, to abide quiet in the station, to yield the same deference and compliance to others which he can presume or pretend to receive from them; who desires only to enjoy the gifts of Providence and the fruits of his industry in a due subordination to public peace and welfare; he will not easily strive or struggle for preferments, he will not foment emulations or factions for his advantage, he will never design to cozen or supplant, to detract or calumniate for advancement of his ends; he thence will not contribute to the mischiefs and troubles in the world.

Self-interest, therefore, is the great enemy to the commonweal; that which perverteth all right, which confoundeth all order, which spoileth all the convenience and comfort of society.

It is a practice, indeed, (this practice of pursuing self-interest so vehemently, so especially above all things) which is looked upon and cried up as a clear and certain point of wisdom; the only solid wisdom; in comparison whereto those precepts which prescribe the practice of strict justice, in generous humanity, free charity, are but pedantical tattles, or notions merely chimerical; so the world now more than ever seemeth to judge, and accordingly to act; and thence is the state of things visibly so bad and calamitous; thence so little honesty in dealings, thence so little settlement in affairs are discernible. But how false that judgment is, will appear if the case be weighed in the balance of pure reason; and most foolish it will appear being scanned according to the principles of religion.

In reason, is it not very absurd that any man should look upon himself as more than a single person; that he should prefer himself before another, to whom he is not in any respect superior; that he should advance his own concernment above the public benefit, which comprehendeth his good, and without which his good cannot subsist? Can any man rationally conceive that he can firmly thrive or persist in a quiet and sweet condition, when he graspeth to himself more than is due or fitting, when he provoketh against himself the emulation, the competition, the opposition, the hatred, and obloquy of all or of many other persons?

May not any man reasonably have the same apprehensions and inclinations as we may have? may not any man justly proceed in the same manner as we may do? will they not, seeing us mainly to affect our private interest, be induced, and in a manner forced, to do the like? Thence, what end can there be of prog-

* —— nullum furor egit in arma. Bella petunt magna victi mercede.—

† Ut quisque maxime ad suum commodum refert quæcunque agit, ita minime est vir bonus; ut qui virtutem præmio metiantur, nullam virtutem nisi malitiam putant, &c.—*Cic. de Leg.* 1.

ging and scrambling for things? and in the confusion thence arising, what quiet, what content can we enjoy?

Again: Doth not nature, by implanting in our constitution a love of society and aversation from solitude, inclinations to pity and humanity, pleasant complacencies in obliging and doing courtesies to others, appetites of honour and good esteem from others, aptness to approve and like the practices of justice, of fidelity, of courtesy, of beneficence, capacities to yield succour and benefit to our brethren, dictate unto us, that our good is inseparably connected and complicated with the good of others, so that it cannot, without its own impairing, subsist alone, or be severed from the good of others; no more than a limb can without suffering and destruction be torn from the whole?

Is there not to all men in some measure, to some men in a higher degree, a generosity innate, most lovely and laudable to all; which disposeth men with their own pain, hazard, and detriment, to succour and relieve others in distress, to serve the public, and promote the benefit of society; so that inordinately to regard private interest doth thwart the reason and wisdom of nature?

The frame of our nature indeed speaketh, that we are not born for ourselves; we shall find man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler thing than to have been designed to serve himself, or to satisfy his single pleasure; his endowments are too excellent, his capacities too large, for so mean and narrow purposes*.[r] How pitiful a creature were man, if this were all he was made for! how sorry a faculty were reason, if it served not to better uses! he debaseth himself, he disgraceth his nature, who hath so low conceits, and pursueth so petty designs.

Nay, even a true regard to our own private good will engage us not inordinately to pursue self-interest; it being much hugged, will be smothered and destroyed.

As we are all born members of the world, as we are compacted into the commonwealth, as we are incorporated into any society, as we partake in any conversation or company, so by mutual support, aid, defence, comfort, not only the common welfare first, but our particular benefit consequently, doth subsist: by hindering or prejudicing them, the public first, in consequence our particular doth suffer; our thriving by the common prejudice will in the end turn to our own loss. As, if one member sucketh too much nourishment to itself, and thence swelleth into an exorbitant bulk, the whole thence incurreth disease, so coming to perish or languish; whence consequently that irregular member will fall into a participation of ruin or decay: so it is in the state of human corporations; he that in ways unnatural or unjust (for justice is that in human societies, which nature is in the rest of things) draweth unto himself the juice of profit or pleasure, so as thence to grow beyond his due size, doth thereby not only create distempers in the public body, but worketh mischief and pain to himself; he must not imagine to escape feeling somewhat of the inconvenience and misery which ariseth from public convulsions and disorders.

So doth reason plainly enough dictate; and religion with clearer evidence and greater advantage discovereth the same.

Its express precepts are, that we should aim to love our neighbour as ourselves, and therefore should tender his interests as our own; that we should not in competition with the greater good of our neighbour regard our own lesser good; that we should not seek our own things, but concern ourselves in the good of others; that we should not consult our own ease and pleasure, but should contentedly bear the burdens of our brethern: *Look not every man to his own things, but every man also to the things of others; Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth; Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; Charity seeketh not its own:*[s] these are apostolical precepts and aphorisms; these are fundamental rules and maxims of our holy religion.

It chargeth us industriously to employ our pains, liberally to expend our goods, yea (in some cases) willingly to expose

* Nec sibi, sed toti natum se credere mundo.
——— nullosque Catonis in actus
Subrepsit, partemque tulit sibi nata voluptas.

[r] St. Paul, Rom. ix.

[s] Phil. ii. 4; 1 Cor. x. 24; Gal. ii. 6; 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

and devote our lives, for the benefit of our brethren.

It recommendeth to us the examples of those who have undergone unspeakable pains, losses, disgraces, troubles, and inconveniences of all kinds, for the furthering the good of others; the examples of our Lord and of his apostles, who never in any case regarded their own interests, but spent and sacrificed themselves to the public welfare of mankind.

It representeth us not only as brethren of one family, who should therefore kindly favour, assist, and grace one another, but as members of one spiritual body (*members one of another*), compacted by the closest bands of common alliance, affection, and interest;[t] whose good much consisteth in the good of each other; who should together rejoice, and condole with one another; who should care for one another's good as for our own; looking upon ourselves to gain by the advantage, to thrive in the prosperity, to be refreshed with the joy, to be graced with the honour, to be endamaged by the losses, to be afflicted with the crosses of our brethren; so that, *If* (as St. Paul saith) *one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*[u]

These which I have already handled are the principal kinds of vicious self-love: there are further some special acts of kin to them, sprouting from the same stock, which I shall touch; such as *vain-glory, arrogance, talking of one's self, thinking about one's self.* Of these I shall treat more briefly.

SERMON LXIII.

OF VAIN-GLORY, ARROGANCE, TALKING AND THINKING OF ONE'S SELF.

2 Tim. iii. 2.—*For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.*

OF VAIN-GLORY.

When a regard to the opinion, or desire of the esteem of men, is the main principle from which their actions do proceed, or the chief end which they propound to themselves, instead of conscience of duty, love and reverence of God, hope of the rewards promised, a sober regard to their true good, this is *vain-glory.* Such was the vain-glory of the Pharisees, who fasted, who prayed, who gave alms, who *did all their works that they might be seen of men*, and from them obtain the reward of estimation and applause:[a] this is that which St. Paul forbiddeth: *Let nothing be done out of strife or vain-glory.*[b]

When men affect and delight in praise from mean or indifferent things; as from secular dignity, power, wealth, strength, beauty, wit, learning, eloquence, wisdom, or craft: as, *There are many* (saith the Psalmist) *that boast themselves in the multitude of their riches.*[c] Nebuchadnezzar was raised with the conceit of having built a palace for the glory of his majesty, Herod was puffed with applause for his oration, the philosophers were vain in the esteem procured by their pretence to wisdom,[d] the Pharisees were elevated with the praise accruing from external acts of piety (fasting twice a-week, making long prayers, tithing mint and cumin;) all which things being in themselves of little worth, the affecting of praise from them is manifestly frivolous and vain. Honour should be affected only from true virtue and really good works.[e]

Those who seek glory from evil things (who *glory in their shame*), from presumptuous transgression of God's law (hectorly profaneness and debauchery), from outrageous violence, from overreaching craft, or from any bad quality, are not only vain-glorious, but impudent.

When men affect praise immoderately, not being content with that measure of good reputation which naturally doth arise from a virtuous and blameless life.

As all other goods, so this should be affected moderately.

It is not worth industry, or a direct aim.

When they are unwilling to part with the esteem of men upon any account, but rather will desert their duty than endure disgrace, prizing the opinion of men be-

[t] Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 25; Rom. xii. 15.
[u] 1 Cor. xii. 26.

[a] Matt. vi. &c. xxiii. 5.
[b] Phil. ii. 3.
[c] Psal. xlix. 6.
[d] Φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοί, Rom. i. 22.
[e] Rom. ii. 7.

fore the favour and approbation of God; as it is said of those rulers, who *believed in our Lord, but because of the Pharisees did not confess him, that they might not be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the glory of men, rather than the glory that is of God;*[f] and those to whom our Saviour said, *How can ye believe, who receive glory from one another, but do not seek the glory that is of God?*[g]

When they pursue it irregularly, are cunning and politic to procure it, hunt for it in oblique ways, lay gins, traps, and baits for it; such are ostentation of things commendable, fair speeches, kind looks and gestures, devoid of sincerity, &c. Such ways ambitious and popular men do use.

This practice is upon many accounts vain and culpable, and it produceth great inconvenience.*

1. It is vain, because unprofitable. Is it not a foolish thing for a man to affect that which little concerneth him to have, which having he is not considerably benefited? Such manifestly is the good opinion of men; how doth that reach us? Do we feel the commotions of their fancy? doth their breath blow us any good?

2. It is vain, because uncertain. How easily are the judgments of men altered! how fickle are their conceits! the wind of heaven is not more fleeting and variable than the wind of popular air.† In a trice the case is turned with them; they admire and scorn, they approve and condemn, they applaud and reproach, they court and persecute the same person, as their fancy is casually moved, or as fortune doth favour a person. Histories are full of instances of persons who have been now the favourites of the people, presently the objects of their hatred and obloquy.

3. It is vain, because unsatisfactory. How can a man he satisfied with the opinion of bad judges?‡ who esteem a man without good grounds, commonly for things not deserving regard; who cannot discern those things which really deserve esteem, good principles and honest intention? These only God can know, these only wise and good men can well guess at: it is therefore vain much to prize any judgment but that of God and of wise men, which are but few. *Praise becometh not the mouth of a fool.*

How also can a man rationally be pleased with the commendation of others, who is sensible of his so great defects, and conscious to himself of so many miscarriages?* which considering, he should be ashamed to receive, he should in himself blush to own any praise.

4. It is vain, because fond. It is ugly and unseemly to men; they despise nothing more than acting out of this principle. It misbecometh a man to perform things for so pitiful a reward, or to look upon it as a valuable recompense for his performances, there being considerations so vastly greater to induce and encourage him; the satisfaction of conscience, the pleasing God, and procuring his favour; the obtaining eternal happiness.

5. It is vain, because unjust. If we seek glory to ourselves, we wrong God thereby, to whom the glory thereof is due. If there be in us any natural endowment considerable (strength, beauty, wit), it is from God, the Author of our being and life: is there any supervenient or acquisite perfection (as skill, knowledge, wisdom?) it is from God, who gave us the means and opportunities of getting it, who guided our proceeding and blessed our industry: is there any advantage of fortune belonging to us (as dignity, power, wealth?) it is the gift of God, who dispenseth these things, who diposeth all things by his providence: is there any virtuous disposition in us, or any good work performed by us? it is the production of God, *who worketh in us to will and to do according to his good pleasure:*[h] have we any good that we can call our own, that we have independently and absolutely made or purchased to ourselves? if not any, why do we assume to ourselves the glory of it, as if we were its makers or authors? it is St. Paul's expostulation, *Who made thee to differ? what hast thou, which thou didst not receive? and*

* Τὸ εὐτελὲς τοῦτο δοξάριον καὶ ἀπόπτυστον.—Naz. Ep. 63.

† Qui dedit hoc hodie, cras auferet idem.

‡ —— Stultus honores Sæpe dat indignis.

* Falsus honor juvat, &c. Quem nisi mendosum?

[f] John xii. 43. [g] John v. 44.

[h] Phil. ii. 13.

if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?[i]

This is that which maketh this vice so odious to God, who is sensible of the injury done him, in robbing him of his due honour: how sensible he is, he showed in that great instance of smiting Herod with a miraculous vengeance, because he did not *give the glory to God*,[j] but arrogated glory to himself, receiving with complacence the profane flatteries of the people. He hath said, *I will not give my glory to another*.

6. It is vain, because mischievous. It corrupteth our mind with a lewd pleasure, which choketh the purer pleasures of a good conscience, spiritual joy and peace.

It incenseth God's displeasure, who cannot endure to see us act out of so mean and base a principle.

It depriveth us of the reward due to good works, performed out of pure conscience, and other genuine principles of piety. Ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν· *They have their reward.*[k]

7. It is vain, because unbeseeming us.

It is observable, that the word הִתְהַלֵּל signifieth to praise or applaud, and also to infatuate or make mad.

Glory doth sit unhandsomely upon us, who are so weak and frail, who are so impure and sinful, who are so liable to reproach and blame: it is like purple on a beggar—a panegyric upon a fly. When all is said that can well be of us, we are ridiculous, because a thousand times more might be said to our disparagement and disgrace.[l] For one good quality, we have many bad; for one good deed, we have done numberless evils. The best things we have or do, yield greater matter of dispraise than commendation, being full of imperfection and blemish.

Absolutely so; comparatively much more. What are we in comparison to God; whose excellency if we consider, and our distance from his perfections, how can we admit commendation? how can we take any share of that which is wholly his due?

If we consider even the blessed angels and saints, and how far short we come of them; what can we say, but praise them who are so worthy, and abhor ourselves who are so vile?

Seeing there are such objects of praise, how can it be conferred on a mortal, vile, wretched creature?

OF ARROGANCE.

When a man (puffed up with conceit of his own abilities, or unmeasurably affecting himself) doth assume to himself that which doth not belong to him (more than in reason and justice is his due, in any kind, more honour, more power, more wisdom, &c.)

When he encroacheth on the rights, invadeth the liberties, intrudeth into the offices, intermeddleth with the businesses, imposeth on the judgments of others; when he will be advising, teaching, guiding, checking, controlling others, without their leave or liking.

When he will unduly be exercising judgment and censure upon the persons, qualities, and actions of his neighbour.

These are instances and arguments of vicious self-love. He that doth rightly understand and duly affect himself, will contain himself within his own bounds, will mind his own affairs, will suffer every man undisturbedly to use his own right and liberty in judging and acting.

The effects of this practice are, dissensions, dissatisfactions, grudges, &c. for men cannot endure such fond and unjust usurpations upon their rights, their liberties, their reputations.

OF TALKING OF ONE'S SELF.

Περιαυτολογία, talking about one's self is an effect and manifest sign of immoderate self-love.

It may seem a very slender and particular matter, but is of great use to be considered and corrected.

To talk much of one's self, of his own qualities, of his concernments, of his actions, so as either downrightly to commend one's self, or obliquely to insinuate grounds of commendation; to catch at praise; or, however, to drive on our own designs and interests thereby.

It is an argument of self-love, proceeding from a fulness of thought concerning one's self, and a fond affection to

[i] 1 Cor iv. 7; John iii. 27.
[j] Acts xii. 23.
[k] Matt. vi. 1.
[l] Job xii. 17; Isa. xliv. 25; Eccles. vii. 8; ii. 2.

one's own things: (*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;*[m] assuredly we think much of that, and we like it greatly, concerning which we are prompt to discourse: the imaginations and affections discharge themselves at the mouth.)

This is a foolish and hurtful practice. For,

1. It is vain, and hath no effect. We thereby seek to recommend ourselves to the opinion of men: but we fail therein; for our words gain no belief. For no man is looked upon as a good judge or a faithful witness in his own case; a good judge and a faithful witness must be indifferent and disinterested; but every man is esteemed to be favourable, to be partial in his opinion concerning himself; to be apt to strain a point of truth and right in passing testimony or sentence upon himself: he, therefore, that speaketh of himself, is not believed, his words have no good effect on the hearers: it is true what the Wise Man observeth; *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find?*[n] (but it is hard to find one who, in making report or passing judgment concerning himself, will be faithful and just.) *Καυχᾶσθαι οὐ συμφέρει μοι.*[o]

2. Yea, it usually hath a contrary effect, and destroyeth that which it aimeth at: self-commendation is so far from procuring a good opinion, that it breedeth an evil one.

Men have a prejudice against what is said, as proceeding from a suspected witness; one who is biassed by self-love and bribed by self-interest to impose upon them: *Not he that commendeth himself is approved.*[p]

It is fastidious; as impertinent, insignificant, and insipid;[q] spending time, and beating their ears to no purpose; they take it for an injury to suppose them so weak as to be moved by such words, or forced into a good conceit.

It is odious and invidious; for all men do love themselves, no less than we ourselves; and cannot endure to see those who affect to advance themselves and reign in our opinion.

It prompteth them to speak evil of us; to search for faults to cool and check us.

It is therefore a preposterous and vain way to think of gaining credit and love: men thereby infallibly lose or depress themselves.

Of all words, those which express ourselves and our things, *I* and *mine*, &c. are the least pleasing to men's ears.

It spoileth conversation; for he that loveth to speak of himself doth least love to hear others speak of themselves, and so is not attentive.

If a man have worthy qualities and do good deeds, let them speak for him; they will of themselves extort commendation; his silence about them, his seeming to neglect them, will enhance their worth in the opinion of men. Prating about them, obtruding them upon men, will mar their credit; inducing men to think them done, not out of love to virtue, but for a vainglorious design. Thus did Cicero, thus have many others, blasted the glory of their virtuous deeds.[r]

3. Supposing you get the belief and the praise you aim at, to have complacence therein is bad or dangerous: it is a fond satisfaction, it is a vicious pleasure; it puffeth up, it befooleth.

4. It is against modesty. It argueth the man hath a high opinion of himself: if he believe himself what he saith, he hath so; if not, why would he persuade others to have it?

Modesty cannot without pain hear others speak of him, nor can with any grace receive commendations; it is therefore great impudence to speak of himself, and to seek praise.

5. We may observe it to be a great temptation to speak falsely. Men, when they affect commendation, will gladly have it to the utmost; are loath to wrong themselves, or to lose any thing; they will therefore at least speak to the extreme bounds of what may be said in their own behalf; and while they run upon the extreme borders of truth, it is hard to stop their career, so as not to launch forth into falsehood: it is hard to stand upon the brink, without falling into the ditch.

It is therefore advisable in our dis-

[m] Matt. xii. 34.
[n] Prov. xx. 6.
[o] 2 Cor. xii. 1.
[p] 2 Cor. x. 18.
[q] 2 Cor. x. 13, *οὐχὶ τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα.*
[r] *Γέγονα ἄφρων καυχώμενος,*—2 Cor. xii. 11; xi. 17.

course to leave ourselves out as much as may be; never, if we can help it, to say, *I*, *mine*, &c., never seeking, commonly shunning and declining occasion to speak of ourselves: it will bring much convenience and benefit to us.

Our discourse will not be offensive; we shall decline envy and obloquy; we shall avoid being talked of; we shall escape temptations of vanity; we shall better attend to what others say, &c.

If we will be speaking of ourselves, it is allowable to speak sincerely and unaffectedly concerning our infirmities and faults; as St. Paul does of himself.[s]

There are some cases wherein a man may commend himself;* as in his own defence, to maintain his authority, to urge his example, &c.; so doth St. Paul often. He calleth it folly to boast (because generally such it is), yet he doth it for those ends.

Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.[t]

THINKING OF OURSELVES.

Thinking of ourselves with glee and pleasure. This is a great nourisher of immoderate self-love; for the more men indulge to a gazing upon themselves with delight, the more they grow in love, the more passionately they come to dote on themselves.

It is good to reflect inward, and to view our souls; but we should do it so, as to find a wholesome displeasure and regret in beholding ourselves so foul and impure, so weak and defectuous, so ugly and deformed: if we do thus, we shall not overlove ourselves.

Some General Remedies of Self-Love.

1. To reflect upon ourselves seriously and impartially, considering our natural nothingness, meanness, baseness, imperfection, infirmity, unworthiness; the meanness and imperfection of our nature, the defects and deformities of our souls, the failings and misdemeanours of our lives. He that doeth this cannot surely find himself lovely, and must therefore take it for very absurd to dote on himself. He will rather be induced to dislike, despise, abhor and loathe himself.

2. To consider the loveliness of other beings superior to us, comparing them with ourselves, and observing how very far in excellency, worth, and beauty, they transcend us; which if we do, we must appear no fit objects of love, we must be checked in our dotage, and diverted from this fond affection to ourselves. It cannot but dazzle our eyes and dull our affections to ourselves.

If we view the qualities and examples of other men, who in worth, in wisdom, in virtue, and piety, do far excel us; their noble endowments, their heroical achievements; what they have done and suffered in obedience to God (their strict temperance and austerity, their laborious industry, their self-denial, their patience, &c.) how can we but in comparison despise and loathe ourselves?

If we consider the blessed angels and saints in glory and bliss; their purity, their humility, their obedience; how can we think of ourselves without contempt and abhorence?

Especially if we contemplate the perfection, the purity, the majesty of God; how must this infinitely debase us in our opinion concerning ourselves, and consequently diminish our fond affection toward things so vile and unworthy?

3. To study the acquisition and improvement of charity toward God and our neighbour. This will employ and transfer our affections; these drawing our souls outward, and settling them upon other objects, will abolish or abate the perverse love toward ourselves.

4. To consider, that we do owe all we are and have to the free bounty and grace of God: hence we shall see that nothing of esteem or affection is due to ourselves; but all to him, who is the Fountain and Author of all our good.

5. To direct our minds wholly toward those things which rational self-love requireth us to regard and seek; to concern ourselves in getting virtue, in performing our duty, in promoting our salvation, and arriving to happiness: this will divert us from vanity; a sober self-love will stifle the other fond self-love.

* Plut. πῶς τις ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινέσειε.
[s] 2 Cor. xii. 5; xi. 30.
[t] Prov. xxvii. 2.

SERMON LXIV.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF ALL MEN.

ROM. xii. 17.—*Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

THE world apparently is come to that pass, that men commonly are afraid or ashamed of religious practice, hardly daring to own their Maker by a conscientious observance of his laws. While profaneness and wickedness are grown outrageously bold, so that many *declare their sin as sodom*;[a] piety and virtue are become pitifully bashful, so that how few have the heart and the face openly to maintain a due regard to them! Men in nothing appear so reserved and shy as in avowing their conscience, in discovering a sense of their duty, in expressing any fear of God, any love of goodness, any concern for their own soul. It is wisdom, as they conceive, to compound with God, and to collude with the world; reserving for God some place in their heart, or yielding unto him some private acknowledgment; while in their public demeanour they conform to the world, in commission of sin, or neglect of their duty: supposing that God may be satisfied with the invisible part of his service, while men are gratified by visible compliance with their ungracious humours.

Such proceeding is built on divers very fallacious, absurd, and inconsistent grounds or pretences; whereby men egregiously do abuse themselves, and would impose on others; namely these, and the like.

They would not, by a fair show and semblance of piety, give cause to be taken for hypocrites; whereas, by dissembling their conscience, and seeming to *have no fear of God before their eyes*, they incur an hypocrisy no less criminal in nature, but far more dangerous in consequence, than is that which they pretend to decline.

They would not be apprehended vainglorious for affecting to serve God in the view of men; whereas often at the bottom of their demeanour a most wretched and worse than pharisaical vain-glory doth lie; they forbearing the performance of their duty merely to shun the censure or to gain the respect of the vilest and vainest persons.

They would be deemed exceedingly honest and sincere, because forsooth all their piety is cordial, pure, and void of sinister regard to popular esteem; whereas partial integrity is gross nonsense; whereas no pretence can be more vain than that we hold a faithful friendship or hearty respect for God, whom we openly disclaim or disregard; whereas also it is easily discernible, that although their piety is not, yet their impiety is popular, and affected to ingratiate with men.

They would be taken for men of brave, courageous, and masculine spirits, exalted above the weaknesses of superstition and scrupulosity; whereas, indeed, out of the basest cowardice, and a dread to offend sorry people, they have not a heart to act according to their duty, their judgment, their best interest.

They would seem very modest in concealing their virtue; while yet they are most impudent in disclosing their want of conscience; while they are so presumptuous toward God, as to *provoke him to his face* by their disobedience;[b] while they are not ashamed to wrong and scandalize their brethren by their ill behaviour.

They would not be uncivil or discourteous in thwarting the mind and pleasure of their company; as if in the meantime they might be most rude toward God in affronting his will and authority; as if any rule of civility could oblige a man to forfeit his salvation; as if it were not rather most cruel discourtesy and barbarous inhumanity to countenance or encourage any man in courses tending to his ruin.

They would not be singular and uncouth in discosting from the common road or fashion of men; as if it were better to leave the common duty than the common faults of men; as if wisdom and virtue were ever the most vulgar things; as if the way to heaven were the broadest, and the most beaten way; as if rarity should abate the price of good things; as if conspiracy in rebellion against God might justify or excuse the fact; as if it were

[a] Isa. iii. 9.

[b] Isa. lxv. 3; Jer. vi. 17; viii. 12.

advisable to march to hell in a troop, or comfortable to lie there for ever among the damned crew of associates in wickedness.

They cannot endure to be accounted zealots or bigots in religion; as if a man could love or fear God too much; or be over-faithful and careful in serving him; as if to be most earnest and solicitous (not in promoting our own fancies, but) in discharging our plain duties could be justly reproachable, or were not indeed highly commendable.

These things I may hereafter fully declare; in the mean time it is manifest that such a practice is extremely prejudicial to religion and goodness; so that it may be very useful to employ our meditations upon this text of the apostle, which directly doth oppose and prohibit it.

The same text he otherwhere (in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians) doth repeat in the same terms (only inserting a clause more fully explaining his sense), backing his precept with his own example; for We, saith he there, did so manage the business of collecting and dispensing alms, as *to avoid that any man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us; providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men.*[c]

The words do imply a precept of very large extent, and touching a great part of our duty; even all thereof which is public and visible; for which we are accountable to the world, whereof man can take any cognisance; which concerneth all our speech and conversation, all our dealing and commerce, all our deportment relating to human society, civil or spiritual.

I shall first a little consider its meaning and design; then I shall propose reasons and inducements to its observance; then I shall declare the folly of those principles and pretences which obstruct that observance.

I. The meaning of it is, that we should have a special care of our external demeanour and conversation, which cometh under the view and observation of men; that it be exempted from any offence or blame;[d] yea, that it be comely and commendable.

The terms in which it is expressed are notably emphatical; we are directed προνοεῖν, *to provide*, to use a providence and forecast in the case: ere we undertake any design, we should deliberate with ourselves, and consider on what theater we shall act, what persons will be spectators, what conceits our practice may raise in them, and what influence probably it will have on them. We should not rush on into the public view with a precipitant rashness, or blind negligence, or contemptuous disregard, not caring who standeth in our way, who marketh what we do, what consequence our proceeding may have on the score of its being public and visible: we should advise beforehand, lay our business, and on set purpose order our behaviour with a regard to those to whose sight and notice we expose it, foreseeing how our actions may affect or decline them. So we must provide; what things? καλὰ things fair and handsome; things not only good, innocent, and inoffensive to the sight of men; but goodly, pleasant, and acceptable to well-disposed beholders; such as our apostle doth otherwhere recommend, when he chargeth us to regard, ὅσα σεμνὰ, *whatever things are venerable*, ὅσα προσφιλῆ, *whatever things are lovely*, ὅσα εὔφημα, *whatever things are of good report*, εἴ τις ἔπαινος, *whatever things are laudable*;[e] and when he doth exhort us *to walk* εὐσχημόνως, *handsomely* and decently, in a comely garb and fashion of life;[f] this may add an obligation to some things not directly prescribed by God, which yet may serve to adorn religion, but it cannot detract any thing from what God hath commanded; it doth comprehend all instances of piety and virtue practicable before men; it certainly doth exclude all commission of sin, and omission of duty, for that nothing can be fair or handsome which is ugly in God's sight, which doth not suit to his holy will.

Such things we must provide, ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων, *before all men*; not only before some men, to whom we bear

[c] 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21.

[d] Ἄμεμπτοι, Phil. ii. 15; Ἀμέγκλητοι, Col. i. 22.

[e] Phil. iv. 8.

[f] Rom. xiii. 13; 1 Thess. iv. 12.

a particular respect, of whom we stand in awe, upon whom we have a design; but universally before all men, as having a due consideration of all those upon whom our deportment may have influence; not despising or disregarding the observations of the meanest or most inconsiderable person whatever.

But in this practice, to avoid misapprehensions, we must distinguish; for it is not required that we should do all things openly, nor intended that we should do any thing vainly; but that we should act constantly according to the nature and reason of things, with upright and pure intention: the apostle doth not mean that in our practice we should resemble the Pharisees, whom our Lord rereproveth for *doing their alms before men*, for loving *to pray standing in the synagogues*, for *doing all their works to be seen of men;* performing those acts of piety openly *in the corners of the street*, which should have been done secretly *in the closet;*[g] and so doing them out of vanity and ambitious design, to procure the good opinion and praise of men: he doth not intend that we should assume a formal garb of singular virtue; that we should aim to seem better than we are, counterfeiting any point of religion or virtue; that we should affect to appear even as good as we are, exposing all our piety to common view; that we should *sound a trumpet before us*,[h] making an ostentation of any good deeds, catching at reputation or applause for them; that we should do any commendable thing chiefly to obtain the good opinion of the world, or to escape its censure: infinitely far it was from the apostle's intention, that we should be *like those whited sepulchres, which appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness;* that is, like those Pharisees, who *did outwardly appear righteous, but within were full of hypocrisy and iniquity*:[i] No;

In some cases we must be reserved, and keep our virtue close to ourselves; and ever under a fair show there must be a real substance of good, together with an honest intention of heart;* a good conscience must always lie at the bottom of a good conversation; the outside must be good, but the best side must be inward; we must endeavour to sanctify our life and conversation, but we must especially labour to purify our hearts and affections.

Join the precept with others duly limiting it, and it doth import, that with pure sincerity and unaffected simplicity (void of any sinister or sordid design) we should in all places, upon all occasions, in all matters, carefully discharge that part of our duty which is public, according to its nature, season, and exigency, that is, publicly; not abstaining from the practice of those good deeds, which cannot otherwise than openly be well performed; or the conspicuous performance whereof is absolutely needful in regard to God's law and the satisfaction of our conscience, is plainly serviceable to the glory of God, is very conducible to the edification of our neighbour, or which may be useful to good purposes concurrent with those principal ends: we should as *good trees* from a deep root of true piety, in due *season* naturally, as it were, shoot forth good fruits, not only pleasant to the sight, but savoury to the taste and wholesome for use;[j] as St. Paul, who, as he saith of himself, that he *did provide things honest in the sight of all men*, so he also doth affirm, that *his rejoicing was this, the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity—he had his conversation in the world.*[k]

There are indeed some duties, or works of piety and virtue, the nature whereof directeth, that in the practice of them we should be reserved; such as those wherein the world is not immediately concerned, and which may with best advantage be transacted between God and our own souls; as private devotion, meditation on God's word and will, the discussion of our consciences, voluntary exercises of penitence, and the like: such also be those wherein the intervention or notice of few persons is required; as deeds of particular charity in dispensing alms, good advice, friendly reproof; the which sort of duties our Lord hath taught us to perform in *secret*,[l] or as closely as we

* Τὸ σεμνὸν ἁπλάστως—Τὸ εὔφημον ἀψοφητί.—Ant. i. § 9, 2, § 5.

[g] Matt. vi. 1, 5; xxiii. 5.

[h] Matt. vi. 2. [i] Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.

[j] Matt. vii. 17; Luke vi. 44; Psal. i. 3.

[k] 2 Cor. viii. 21; i. 12.

[l] Ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ.—Matt. vi. 4, 6.

may; studiously keeping our observance of them from the eyes of men; thereby assuring our sincerity to ourselves, and guarding our practice from any taint of vanity or suspicion of hypocrisy; as also in some cases avoiding to cause prejudice or offence to our neighbours: *Take heed* (saith our Lord) *that ye do not your alms before men;* and, *Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet;* and, *Thou, when thou fastest, annoint thine head and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast;* and, *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.*[m]

But there are divers other duties, the discharge whereof necessarily is notorious and visible; the public being the stage on which they are to be acted; the transaction of them demanding the intercourse of many persons, who are the objects or instruments of them, or are somewise concerned in them: such is that negative duty, of a general nature and vast comprehension, which we may call innocence;[n] that is, a total abstinence from sin, or forbearance to transgress any divine command; which is a part of Job's character: *That man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil;*[o] the which duty, being to be practised at all times in every place, cannot avoid being observable.

Such are also divers positive duties; for such is the profession of our faith in God, and acknowledgment of his heavenly truth, revealed in the gospel of our blessed Saviour; which is styled *confessing our Lord before men,*[p] and is, as St. Paul telleth us, indispensably requisite to salvation.

Such is joining in that public adoration, whereby the honour and authority of God are upheld in the world with seemly expressions of reverence; the which is to be performed solemnly, and, as the holy Psalmist speaketh, *in the midst of the congregation.*[q]

Such is zeal in vindication of God's honour, when occasion requireth, from blasphemous aspersions, or from scandalour offences against it.

Such are justice, equity, fidelity, and ingenuity in our dealings; meekness, gentleness, patience, kindness, and courtesy in our converse; peaceableness in our carriage, and charitable beneficence; the objects whereof are most general, according to those apostolical precepts: *That our moderation* (or our equity and ingenuity) *be known unto all men;* that we *show all meekness to all men;* that *we must not strive but be gentle unto all men;* that we be *patient toward all men;* that we *pursue peace with all men;* that *as we have opportunity, we should do good unto all men;* should *abound in love one towards another, and towards all men;* should ever *follow that which is good, both among ourselves and to all men;* should *liberally distribute to the saints and to all men:* in performing which so general duties, how can a man pass *incognito?* how can he so deal with all men indiscernibly?[r]

Such are likewise gravity and modesty in our behaviour; sweetness, soberness, aptness to profit and edify the hearers in our discourse; moderation and temperance in our corporeal enjoyments; industry in our business and the works of our calling; integrity in the management of any office or trust committed to us; a constant practice of which virtues is not only enjoined to us as our particular duty, but for public example.[s]

Such are seasonable defence of the truth, and opposing of error; the commendation of virtue, and reprehension of notorious sin, with the like.

Such things must be practised, because indispensable duties; but they cannot be done out of sight, or barring the observation of men; they do involve publicness; they carry a light and lustre with them, attracting all eyes to regard them; it is as impossible to conceal them as to hide the sun from all the world, or to *conceal a city that is set upon a hill;* for *nothing*, as St. Chrysostom saith, *doth render a man so illustrious, although he ten thousand times would be hid, as an open practice of virtue.**[t] Wherefore,

[m] Matt. vi. 1, 6, 17; xviii. 15.
[n] Psal. xxxiv. 14. [o] Job. i. 1; ii. 3.
[p] Rom. x. 10.
[q] Psal. xcix. 5; cxxxii. 7; xxii. 22.

* Οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτως ἐπίσημον ἄνδρα ποιεῖ, κἂν μυριάκις λανθάνειν βούληται, ὡς ἀρετῆς ἐπίδειξις.—Chrys. in Matt. v. 16.

[r] Phil. iv. 5; Tit. iii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 24; 1 Thess. v. 14; Heb. xii. 14; Rom. xii. 18; Gal. vi. 10; 1 Thess. iii. 12; v. 15; 2 Cor. ix. 13
[s] 2 Tim. iv. 12; Tit. ii. 4, 7.
[t] Matt. v. 14.

the works of mercy, saith St. Austin, *the affection of charity, the sanctity of godliness, the incorruptness of chastity, the moderation of sobriety, these are perpetually to be held, whether we are in the public or at home; whether before men or in the closet, whether we speak or keep silence.**

In the practice of them, it is true, we mainly should respect the approving our conscience to God, with expectation of our recompense from him; not being much concerned in the judgment or pleasure of men, purely considered in themselves;[u] not aiming at any interest of credit or profit from them as a reward of our work.† *We ought*, as St. Austin saith, while we do good, *to be seen, but we ought not to do it that we may be seen; the end of our joy, the bound of our comfort, should not be there; so that we should think ourselves to have obtained the whole fruit of a good work, when we have been seen and commended.*‡ No, *whatever we do*, we should, as the apostle directeth, do it *as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; doing it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord we shall receive the reward of the inheritance.*[v]

Yet nothing in the mean-time should hinder us from performing such necessary duties: strictly and exactly, with our most diligent care and endeavour, even in that light which their nature doth carry in it.

How much soever of our virtue or piety out of humility or modesty we may conceal, yet we must be careful of discovering any vice or irreligion, either by notoriously committing any thing forbidden by God, or omitting any thing commanded by him.

This we should not do upon any terms, upon any pretence whatever; no wicked fashion should engage us, no bad example should inveigle us, no favour of men should allure us, no terror should scare us thereto; we should not out of fear, out of shame, out of complaisance, out of affected prudence or politic design; out of deference to the quality, dignity, or authority of any person; out of regard to any man's desire or pleasure; we should not to decline offence, envy, blame, reproach, ill treatment, or upon any such account, comply in any sinful practice, waive any duty, neglect any season of performing a good deed, whereby we may glorify God or edify our neighbour, or promote the welfare of our own soul.

To such a practice, according to the intent of St. Paul's injunction, we are obliged; and thereto we may be induced by divers considerations, particularly by those which we shall now propose.

1. We may consider that the public is the proper, natural, and due place of goodness; it should dwell in the light, it should walk freely and boldly everywhere, it should expose itself to open view, that it may receive from rational creatures its due approbation, respect, and praise;* it by publicness is advanced, and the more it doth appear, the more beautiful, the more pleasant, the more useful it is; yielding the fairer lustre, the greater influence, the better effects; thereby diffusing and propagating itself, becoming exemplary, instructive and admonitive; drawing lovers and admirers to it: exciting and encouraging men to embrace it; wherefore it is very absurd that it should skulk or sneak; it is a great damage to the public that it should retire from common notice.

On the other hand, it is proper for wickedness never to appear or to show its head in view; it should be confined to darkness and solitude, under guard of its natural keepers, shame and fear;† it should be exterminated from all conversation among rational creatures, and banished

* Opera misericordiæ, affectus charitatis, sanctitas pietatis, incorruptio castitatis, modestia sobrietatis, semper hæc tenenda sunt; sive cum in publico sumus, sive cum in domo; sive ante homines, sive in cubiculo; sive loquentes, sive tacentes.—*Aug. in Ep.* 1; *Joh. Tract.* 8.

† ——— non cum fama sed cum rerum natura deliberandum est.—*Sen. Ep.* 81.

‡ Si times spectatores non habebis imitatores; debes ergo videri, sed non ad hoc debes facere, ut videaris, non ibi debet esse finis gaudii tui, non ibi terminus lætitiæ tuæ, ut putes te totum fructum consecutum esse boni operis, cum visus fueris atque laudatus.—*Ibid.*

[u] 1 Cor. iv. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 4, 5; Gal. i. 10.

[v] Eph. vi. 6; Col. iii. 23, 24.

* Bona conscientia prodire vult et conspici, ipsas nequitia tenebras timet.—*Sen. Ep.* 27.

† Omne malum aut timore aut pudore natura perfudit.—*Tert. Apol.* cap. 1, Job xxiv, 13-17.

to the infernal shades: publicness doth augment and aggravate it; the more it is seen, the more ugly, the more loathsome, the more noxious it is; its odious shape being disclosed, its noisome steams being dispersed, its pestilent effects being conveyed thereby.

Wherefore, to smother virtue (that fair child of light) in privacy, and to vent sin (*the works of darkness*) openly, is quite to transplace things out of their natural situation and order;[w] according to which we are taught by our Lord, that *he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest;* and by St. Paul, that *every one who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved:*[x] so indeed it is, and will be, where conscience retaineth its due sway and force; where a due respect and reverence are preserved for goodness.

As that any good cometh from detection of sin is an accidental advantage; so that any mischief doth ever follow the manifestation of virtue is an unnatural abuse; the which may well be prevented: there can be no danger of acting any good most evidently, if we do withal act sincerely, having purified our hearts from dishonest intention and from ambitious vanity; the fear of which should not wholly drive virtue under the hatches and bring vice upon the stage. But,

2. We should consider, that we cannot really in any competent or tolerable measure be good men, without approving ourselves such in our conversation before men.

Whatever may be pretended, it commonly doth happen, and it ever is to be suspected, that the invisible piety which is not accompanied with visible conscientiousness is false, or is no piety at all; or that they who have little care and conscience to serve God publicly have much less to serve him privately; or that such as betray a scandalous negligence of their ways will hardly maintain a careful watch over their hearts; for the same causes (be it profane infidelity, or looseness of principles, or supine incogitancy, or sloth, or stupidity) which dispose them to disregard God and his laws before the world, more effectually will incline them to neglect God and forget their duty by themselves, where beside their own conscience there is no witness, no judge, no censor to encourage or reproach them. But admit it possible, and put case, that sometimes the heart and conversation may not run parallel; that a man may better govern his interior thoughts and affections than he doth manage his exterior behaviour and actions: that a man secretly may cleave to God, although he seemeth openly to desert him; yet this will not suffice to constitute or denominate a man good; because much of goodness, as we have showed, even the nobler half thereof (that part whereby God is most glorified, and whereby the world is most benefited), doth lie in open and visible practice: that virtue therefore must be very imperfect, that obedience must be very lame, which is deficient in so great a part.[y]

As there can be no fair pretence to goodness, where so little thereof is conspicuous; so there can be no real integrity thereof, where so much of duty is wanting.

Our Lord hath taught us, that *every tree is known by its fruit;* and St. James saith, that *faith is showed by works;*[z] and so it is that a man can hardly be good in any reasonable degree without appearing such. Impiety may, but piety cannot be quite concealed. As gold may be counterfeited (for all is not gold that glistereth), yet true gold always doth look like gold; so although bad men sometimes may seem good, yet good men also must seem such, appearing in their own native temper and lustre.

Goodness cannot be disguised in the shape of evil, because simplicity and innocence are essential ingredients of it: any mixture of notorious sin, any visible neglect of duty assuring (yea formally making) a want of it, or a real defect therein: it may be daubed with false aspersions, it may be dimmed by the breath of unjust and uncharitable censures; but, wiping them off, its natural hue certainly will appear.

Wherefore, if we would satisfy ourselves in our own consciences, or justify ourselves to others, that we are truly

[w] Rom. xiii. 12; Eph. v. 11.
[x] John iiii 21; Eph. v. 13.
[y] James ii. 10. [z] Luke vi. 44; James ii. 18.

good, we must (without partiality, or distinguishing between public and private) like the holy Psalmist, *have respect unto all God's commandments;* we, like Zachary and Elizabeth, *must walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;* we must, like David, *accomplish all God's will;*[a] we must observe St. Paul's rule, *to abstain,* ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ, *from* both *every kind of evil* and *every bad appearance.*[b] But further,

3. A great care of our good behaviour before men is necessary in regard to Almighty God; whose just interest is preserved, whose due homage is paid, whose honour is promoted thereby; the same being greatly prejudiced and impaired by the contrary defailance.

It is a clear point of justice toward God, as to render all obedience to him, so particularly that which consisteth in an open acknowledgment and service of him; for as he made and doth preserve not only the heart but the tongue, the members, the whole man, so all must concur in rendering their tribute of reverence and service to him.[c]

The apostle doth prescribe, that *whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God;*[d] and well he might, seeing that to glorify God is indeed to execute the main design of our creation, to apply our faculties to their best use, to achieve the most proper and most excellent work whereof we are capable; to do that which is the worthiest and happiest employment of angels, which all the company of heaven, with most ardent desire, with most zealous ambition, with restless endeavour, doth pursue; and this we cannot better, we cannot otherwise do, than by an apparent good conversation. For,

He that apparently in all his actions maketh conscience of obeying God's laws, thereby doth evidence his firm persuasion concerning the existence and providence of God; doth adhere to him against all adversaries of piety, and all temptations to rebellion; doth avow his sovereign majesty and authority; doth yield him due veneration and obedience; doth show right apprehensions of him, and just affections towards him; implying that he doth most highly esteem him, doth most heartily love him, doth chiefly dread him, doth repose his trust and hope in him for all his happiness; hath a great opinion of his wisdom, a great awe of his power, a great sense of his goodness; the which practice is in itself a direct and formal glorification of God, in his own person.

He also thereby doth further promote the glory of God, instructing, exciting, and encouraging others to the like practice of deferring respect and service to God; for naturally men have such a capacity, such aptitude, such proclivity to religion (or to the acknowledgement and worship of their Maker), that when they behold others seriously and earnestly pursuing it, they are easily drawn to conspire therein; especially those who are not utterly perverted and corrupted by ill custom.

And whereas good conversation hath a native beauty, affecting beholders with delight; whereas the fruits of virtue have a pleasing sweetness, grateful to all who taste them;* men from that sight and that sense will presently be moved to commend the wisdom, and to bless the goodness of him who was pleased to institute so excellent a religion, to enact so beneficial laws, to prescribe so wholesome duties to us: for *when* (saith the most divine Father,†) *an infidel shall see thee, a believer, to be* κατεσταλμένον—*staunch, sober, orderly, he will be astonished, and will say, In truth, great is the God of Christians: What men hath he made! what persons out of what persons hath he made them! how from men hath he made them angels! If one abuse them, they do not rail; if one smite them, they do not resent; if one injure them, they pray for him that doeth the offence; they know not to remember ill turns, they skill not to be vain, they have not learnt to lie, they cannot abide to forswear, or rather to swear at all, but sooner would choose to have their tongue cut out, than to let an oath slip out of their mouth.*

So may we really glorify God; and otherwise than by open practice we cannot do it; for glory doth require a pub-

[a] Ποιεῖν πάντα τὰ θελήματά μου.
[b] (Num. xv. 39, 40;) Psal. cxix. 6; Luke i. 6; Acts xiii. 22; 1 Thess. v. 23.
[c] Rom. xii. 1.
[d] 1 Cor. x. 31.

* Ἀρετῆς ἄσκησις τίμιον μὲν κτῆμα τῷ ἔχοντι, ἥδιστον δὲ θέαμα τοῖς ἐπιτυγχάνουσι.—Bas. Ep. 42.
† Ὅταν γὰρ ἄπιστος, &c.—Chrys. ἀνδρ. θ'. (p. 524.)

lic stage; it implying, as Seneca saith, *the consent of many worthy persons* declaring their esteem; it being, as Cicero defineth it, *the agreeing praise of good men, with an uncorrupted vote judging well of an excellent virtue.**

Wherefore toward our being enabled to glorify God, two things must concur; that we be good men, and that we be openly such.

That we be good men, because otherwise our commendation will have no worth or weight; for *praise is not comely in the mouth of sinners.*† It is no ornament to be commended by ill men, to whose words little regard is due, little trust can be given.

That we be good openly, avowing God in practice conducing to his honour; otherwise no glory can accrue to him from our goodness: we may serve God, and please him in private; but we cannot by that service glorify him; at least at present, and here in this world. It is true, the closest piety will yield glory to God at the last, when *our Lord shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe;*[e] but to design such a future glorification of God is not enough; it is our duty to glorify God now, that we may be rewarded for it, and that he may requite us with glory hereafter.

God himself telleth us in the Psalm, *Whoso offereth praise, he glorifieth me;*[f] and how can praise be offered, or to what purpose will it be offered, otherwise than apparently, either in word or deed, by oral or by real expression, to the ears or to the eyes of men, so as to occasion in them the production of worthy conceptions and due affections toward God? In such a manner the holy man did offer it, who said, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee; I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation:*[g] he did it sometimes with his mouth, which is a notable part of our conversation; but we may do it continually by our life; for, *He* (saith St. Austin) *who praiseth God with his tongue, cannot do that always; but he that praiseth God by his manners can always do it.**

This motive is by the great masters of our Christian practice frequently urged; for

St. Paul wisheth the Philippians[h] *to be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the praise and glory of God;* he prayeth for the Thessalonians:[i] that *God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified in them;* he particularly doth incite the Corinthians to works of charity, that *by that ministration* men might be induced to *glorify God,*[j] rendering him thankful praise for their beneficial obedience.

St. Peter likewise doth exhort all Christians *to have their conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they might by their good works, which they should behold, glorify God in the day of visitation*[k] (that is, perhaps, when they carefully do view and reflect on them.)

Our Lord himself thus chargeth his disciples: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;*[l] they did observe his command, and the effect did follow, man being converted to God, no less by the radiant integrity of their life, than by the persuasive efficacy of their doctrine: and, *In this* (saith our Lord again) *is my father glorified, if ye bear much fruit:*[m] what fruit was that? what but of good works, visible to the eye and perceptible to the taste; otherwise how could men thence find cause to glorify God?

In fine, this is declared to be the peculiar design of our religion, or of the

* Gloria consensum multorum exigit—Consentire in hoc plures insignes et præstantes viri debent, ut claritas sit —*Sen. Ep.* 102.

Gloria est consentiens laus bonorum incorrupta voce bene judicantium de excellente.—*Cic.* 3; *Tusc. init.*——Gloria est frequens de aliquo fama cum laude.—*Cic. de Inv.* ii. 39.

† Non est speciosa laus in ore peccatoris.—Ecclus. xv. 9.

[e] 2 Thess. i. 10, [f] Psal. l. 23.

* Qui Deum laudat lingua, non semper potest; qui moribus Deum laudat semper potest. —*Aug. in* 1 *Ep. Joh. Tr.* 8.

[g] Psal. xxii. 22; cxi. 1; cvii. 32; cix. 30.

[h] Phil. i. 11. [i] 2 Thess. i. 11.——

[j] 2 Cor. ix. 11-13.

[k] 1 Pet. ii. 12,—Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς.

[l] Matt. v. 16. [m] John xv. 8.

whole Christian institution; to this end we are made *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that we should show forth the praises* (or virtues) *of him, who hath called us out of darkness to his marvellous light;*[n] not only by our profession, but in our practice declaring his goodness.

On the other hand, by stifling our virtue and conscience, in an open compliance with sin, or neglect of our duty, we greatly shall dishonour God; for thereby in effect we deny him and desert him; we injure his majesty, and disclaim our allegiance to him; we intimate our mean opinion of him, and small affection to him; we betray our want of reverence to his excellency, of dread to his greatness, of love to his goodness, of hope in his promises and gracious overtures of mercy, of fear in regard to his severe justice and fierce menaces; so immediately we dishonour him, and we thereby also do countenance disrespect and disobedience to him; and our behaviour tendeth to produce or to conform the like irreligious dispositions of mind and impious practices in others; so that with horrible disingenuity we cross the design of our creation, and violate our greatest obligations toward our Maker.

Indeed what greater affront or more heinous indignity can we offer to God, than openly before the world, *by* the most real expression of *our works, to deny* and disown *him:*[o] than to be notoriously ashamed or afraid to avow him for our Lord and Master; than to express no sense of our duty to him, no reverence of his authority, no gratitude for his benefits to us; than visibly to prefer any other consideration or worldly advantge before a regard to his will and pleasure?

In this, open sin doth outgo private wickedness, and putteth down even the worst hypocrisy (beside its own), that it not only offendeth God, but sorely woundeth his honour, and exposeth his glorious name to contempt; by which consideration such miscarriages are frequently aggravated in holy scripture: so in the prophets God complaineth of his people, for having by their scandalous crimes *profaned his holy name among the heathen;*[p] so St. Paul expostulateth with the Jew, *Thou that boastest of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?*[q] so Nathan told David, that God would punish him, *because by his bad deed he had given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.*[r] But,

4. We should be careful of our good behavior in the sight of men, that we may thereby maintain the dignity and repute of our Christian profession, which by our naughty or negligent demeanour will be much disparaged and disgraced.

Most evident it is to reason, that a visible practice, conformable to the rules of our religion, cannot otherwise than exceedingly commend and grace it; for how can the goodness of a rule more surely obtain its due commendation, than from its being applied to observable practice and experience?

Assuredly charity, meekness, humility, patience, sobriety, discretion, and all Christian virtues, as in themselves they are very amiable and venerable to all men, as they yield great benefit and much pleasure to those whom their consequences do touch; so they do ingratiate the law which prescribeth them, they bring esteem to the principles whence they are derived; *he* (as the apostle saith) *that in these things serveth Christ, is* both *acceptable to God, and approved of men,*[s] as the follower of a most excellent rule.

We may also consider, that a conspicuous practice, according to our religion, is a demonstrative proof that we do seriously and firmly embrace it, or that we are heartily and steadily persuaded of its truth; which is no small credit to any profession; arguing that it hath a good foundation in reason, apt to bottom and sustain a solid faith.

And as thereby we pregnantly do evidence that we ourselves do highly value the noble privileges, the excellent promises, the precious rewards, exhibited in the gospel; so we thereby do breed a like esteem in others; upon whom the authority of men apparently virtuous and conscientious infallibly will have a forcible influence.

Such a practice will have a great stroke

[n] 1 Pet. ii. 9. [o] Tit. i. 16.
[p] Ezek. xxxvi. 21; Isa. lii. 2.
[q] Rom. ii. 23. [r] 2 Sam. xii. 14.
[s] Rom. xiv. 18.

toward evincing the truth and reality, the perfect excellency, the notable strength and efficacy of our religion; plainly showing, that it is not a mere name, an idle pretence, a weak fancy, a dry speculation, a chimerical dream; but a vigorous and masculine principle, able to produce most worthy fruits of substantial goodness, *profitable to men;* conducible to our own welfare, and to the benefit of others.

As gallant actions, becoming a noble rank, elevated above the vulgar level, do illustrate and dignify nobility itself; so doth a worthy conversation, beseeming our high station in the heavenly kingdom, our near alliances to God, those splendid titles and glorious privileges assigned to to every faithful Christian in the evangelical charter, render our state admirable, and make it seem an excellent advantage to be a Christian.

Hence in the apostolical writings an observance of the evangelical laws is so much and often enforced by this consideration; for upon this account we are exhorted to a careful discharge of our duty, that *we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things;* we are urged to *have our conversation worthy of the gospel;* to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called*, to behave ourselves *as worthily becometh saints*[t] (that is, persons instituted in so holy a religion, and designed to so peculiar excellency in virtue;) to *walk as children of the light*[u] (that is, of truth and knowledge revealed from heaven;) to *walk worthy of God, who hath called us unto his kingdom and glory; worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good word;*[v] the which enforcements of duty do imply a visible practice, producing the visible effects of ornament and credit to our religion, recommending it to the minds and consciences of men.

Contrariwise, the defect of good conversation before men in Christians is upon divers accounts disgraceful to our religion. For,

It tempteth men to judge that we ourselves do not heartily believe its truth or value its worth; that we do not approve its doctrine for reasonable, or take its advantages for considerable; or deem the name and state of a Christian to be honourable; seeing we are not concerned to own them, or do not care to engage our reputation in avowing and abetting them in that way which doth best signify our mind and meaning:* for men certainly will judge of our sense not so much by what we say as from what we do; not by our verbal profession or pretence, but from our practice, as the surest indication of our heart.

Wherefore, when they hear us to confess our faith, and see us act like infidels, they will be forced to esteem us either for subdolous hypocrites or for inconsistent fools; who assume the name of Christians, and pretend to great advantages thence, yet in effect do not mind or regard them; highly commending the rules of our religion, but not at all observing them; greatly admiring the example of our Saviour, but not caring to imitate it; describing heaven for a most happy place, but not striving to get thither in the sole way which our Lord prescribeth, of faithful and diligent obedience to his precepts.

Seeing, I say, this repugnance between our profession and our practice will induce men to charge us with hypocrisy or folly; and if the professors be taken for counterfeits or fools, the profession itself will hardly scape from being held imposture or folly.

Our religion at least will thence be exposed to the censures of being no better than a fond device, and a barren notion, unpracticable, ineffectual, and insignificant to any good purpose.

The visible misbehaviour, I say, of Christians will assuredly derive obloquy and reproach on Christianity, if not as bad, yet as vain, impotent, impertinent, and useless; especially those who are disaffected to it will hence take advantage to insult upon it with contemptuous scorn: To what, will they say, do your fine rules serve? what effects do your glorious hopes produce? where are the fruits of that holy faith and heavenly doctrine which you so extol and magnify?

[t] Tit. ii. 10; Phil. i. 27; Eph. iv. 1; v. 3; Rom. xvi. 2.
[u] Eph. v. 8.
[v] 1 Thess. ii. 12; Col. i. 10.

* Εἰ δέ τις ἐλεγχθῇ πράξας τι ἄνομον, ὁ τοιοῦτος οὐ μόνον ἑαυτὸν ἔβλαψεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ βλασφημίαν προσέτριψε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ.—Const. Ap. ii. 8.

Whereas, also, bad conversation commonly doth not only deprive men of the benefits which our religion promiseth, but doth carry with it hurtful fruits; men that see or feel them will be apt to impute them to religion.

If a Christian be unjust, censorious, factious, anywise offensive or troublesome, although irreligion be the cause of such things, yet religion must bear the blame, and they presently exclaim,

Quantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

Whence St. Paul (who as a powerful instructor doth impress matters of duty by the most proper motives) both often and upon all occasions urge this consideration: he chargeth us *to give no offence in any thing, that the ministry* (or evangelical dispensation) *be not blamed,*[w] or exposed to the censure of any captious Momus; he biddeth us to forbear harsh judgment and all uncharitable dealing, that *our good be not evil spoken of;*[x] he presseth the discharge of our duty in each calling and relation, that by neglect thereof the gospel be not defamed: *Let* (saith he) *as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed;* and, *Let women be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed;* and, *I will that younger women marry, bear children, guide the house* (so as) *to give no occasion to the adversary* (that is, to persons disaffected to Christianity) *to speak reproachfully* (of it:[y]) which discourse, by clear parity of reason, may be applied to any other state or relation.

Now seriously what greater mischief can we do, what heavier guilt may we contract, than by working dishonour to God's adorable name, than by casting reproach on God's heavenly truth, than by drawing a scandal on that holy religion, which the Son of God came down from heaven to establish, for the glory of God and salvation of mankind? Surely next after directly blaspheming God, and defying religion with our own mouths, the next crime is to make others to do so, or in effect to do it by their profane tongues.[z]

There remain divers arguments of very great moment, which the time will not suffer me to urge; and therefore I must reserve them to another occasion.

SERMON LXV.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF ALL MEN.

ROM. xii. 17.—*Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

I HAVE formerly discoursed upon this apostolical precept; and having declared the meaning of it (briefly importing that we should have a special care of our external behaviour, coming under the view and observation of men, that it be perfectly innocent and inculpable), I did propose divers motives inducing to the observance of it; but divers others of great importance the time would not allow me to urge; I shall therefore now proceed to offer them to your consideration.

I did then show that a regard to the reason and nature of things, to the satisfaction of our conscience, to the honour of God, and to the credit of our religion, did require from us a good conversation before men; I now further add, that,

I. The real interest of piety and virtue do exact such a conversation, as the most effectual way of upholding, advancing, and propogating them among men.

Example is a very powerful thing either way; both for attraction to good, and seduction to evil: such is the nature of men, that they are more apt to be guided by the practice of others than by their own reason, and more easily can write after a copy than by a rule; that they are prone to imitate whatever they see done, be it good or bad, convenient or inconvenient, profitable or hurtful, emulating the one, and aping the other; that they love to be in the fashion, and will go anywhither in company, presuming of support, defence, and comfort therein; that they will satisfy their minds and jus-

[w] 2 Cor. vi. 3.—Ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ.
[x] Rom. xiv. 16.
[y] 1 Tim. vi. 1; Tit. ii. 5; 1 Tim. v. 14.
[z] Rom. ii. 24.

tify their doings by any authority, deeming that laudable or allowable, or at least tolerable and excusable, for which they can allege precedents; judging, that if they are not singular, they are innocent, or however not very culpable; that hardly they will undertake any thing without countenance, whereby their modesty is in some measure secured, and partners engaged to bear a share with them in the censure to which their deportment is liable. Hence a visible good conversation will have a great efficacy toward the promotion and propagation of goodness; the authority of that being adjoined to the native worth and beauty, to the rational plausibility, to the sensible benefit of virtue, will cogently draw men to it; it will be a clear pattern, whereby they shall be informed what they are obliged and what they are able to perform; it will be a notable spur, smartly exciting them to mind and pursue their duty; it will be a vigorous incentive, inflaming their courage, and provoking an emulation to do well.

The visible succour and countenance of many, espousing the cause of goodness by their practice, will assuredly bring it into request and vogue, and thence into current use and fashion; so just a cause cannot fail to prosper, having any reasonable forces to maintain it; it will have great strength, great boldness and assurance, when a considerable party doth appear engaged on its side.

Yea, sometimes even the example of a few will do it great service; the rarity giving a special lustre to their virtue, and rendering it more notable; according to that intimation of the apostle, when he thus doth exhort the Philippians to a cheerful and forward practice of goodness: *Do all things* (saith he) *without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.*[a]

A good conversation doth notify good men to one another, and draweth them together, and combineth them in a party, for the protection of goodness, heartening and aiding one another therein.

Such advantages goodness doth always need; for it ever hath in the world many adversaries, striving by violent force to beat it down, or by treacherous fraud to supplant it; who use their authority and interest to suppress it; who by their evil example do seduce from it; who labour by detraction to blast it, by scorn and reproach to discourage it, by divers temptations and baits to entice from it; who combining their forces with the wicked spirits, and with the corrupt inclinations of men, do raise a mighty party for wickedness.

Wherefore, to balance such oppositions, goodness doth need friends to maintain it; not only friends in heart, or secret well wishers; but open friends, who frankly will avow it, and both in word and deed will stoutly abet it.

A demure, bashful, timorous friendship, will rather prejudice than help it; for nothing will more animate its foes to assail and persecute it, than observing its friends to slink and sneak: when good men hide their faces, as if they were ashamed of their goodness, then bad men will grow more impudent and insolent in their outrages against it.

Wherefore, if we would have goodness hold up its head, we must openly take its part; if we would not be guilty of its ruin, we must stand up to uphold it; for whoever openly complieth with sin, or neglecteth his duty, may well be charged with its ruin; since if thou so desertest goodness, another after thy pattern may do the like, and a third may follow him; so the neglect of it may soon be propagated until at length it may be quite abandoned, and left destitute of support: if it doth not thus happen, it will as to thee be accidental, and no thanks to thee for its better fortune.

The declension of piety is not perhaps more to be ascribed to any other cause than to this—that men who approve goodness in their hearts are so backward to show it in their practice; that good men do so affect retirement and wrapping up their virtue in obscurity; that most men think it enough if in the cause of religion against profaneness and dissoluteness they appear neuters, and do not impugn it: for if in a time of infection all sound men do shut up themselves, and all sick men walk abroad, how necessarily must the plague reign in the place?

[a] Phil. ii. 14, 15.

II. Charity toward our neighbour demandeth from us a great care of our conversation before men.

The law of charity, which is the great law of Christianity, doth oblige us earnestly to further our neighbour's good of all kinds, especially that which is incomparably his best good, the welfare of his soul; which how can we better do, than by attracting him to the performance of his duty to God, and by withdrawing him from the commission of sin? And how can we do that without an apparently good conversation, or without plainly declaring, as occasion showeth, for virtue, both in word and deed? how can a shy reservedness conduce to that end? what will invisible thoughts or affections of heart confer thereto?

It is a precept of charity, that we should *pursue things wherewith one may edify another*:[b] and how can we perform that duty, without imparting our mind, and as it were transfusing it into others; so as by converting them from error and sin, by instilling good principles, by exciting good resolutions, to lay in them a foundation of goodness; or by cherishing and improving the same, to rear a structure of virtue in them? how can we mutually edify without mutually advising virtue, exhorting to it, recommending and impressing it by our exemplary behaviour?

The apostles do enjoin, that we should *exhort one another, and edify one another*; that we should *consider one another, to provoke* (or to whet and instigate one another) *to love and to good works*;[c] the which can nowise be performed, without expressly declaring for goodness and remarkable actings in its behalf: to commend and press it by word is a part of our duty; but not all of it, nor sufficient to this purpose; especially seeing we cannot urge that with good confidence, nor shall be held serious in pleading for it, which we do not ourselves embrace in practice; for how can we expect that our reason should convince others, when it doth not appear really to have persuaded ourselves, when our doings evidently do argue the weakness of our discourse?

Words hardly will ever move without practice, although practice sometimes will persuade without words; according to that of St. Peter, *Ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives, while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear*[d] (or due reverence to them.)

Again: We are frequently commanded to shun *the giving any offence*, or *the putting a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in the way of our brother*;[e] that is, to do anything which anywise may confer to his incurring any sin: the which precepts are violated not only by positive and active influence, by proposing erroneous doctrine, evil advice, fraudulent enticements to sin, or discouragements from duty; but also by withholding the means serving to prevent his transgression; such as a tacit indulgence or connivance, when good admonition may reclaim him; the omission of good example when it is seasonable, and probably may prove efficacious: for these neglects have a moral causality, inducing or encouraging the commission of sin; our silence, our forbearing to act, our declining fair opportunities to guide him into the right way will be taken for signs of approbation and consent; and consequently as arguments to justify or to excuse bad practice, in proportion to the authority and esteem we have; which ever will be some in this case, when they favour the infirmity of men.

Charity doth further oblige us, upon just cause, and in due season, to check and reprove our neighbour misdemeaning himself; for, *Warn the disorderly* (saith the apostle;) and, *Have no fellowship* (saith he) *with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*; and, *Thou shalt not* (saith the law) *hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him*:[f] where forbearance of reproof is implied to show not only a defect of charity, but hatred of our brother; and a good reason is intimated for it, because in so doing we suffer sin to lie

[b] Rom. xiv. 19; 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

[c] Παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους,—1 Thess. v. 11; Heb. x. 24.

[d] 1 Pet. iii. 1.

[e] 1 Cor. x. 32; viii. 9; 2 Cor. vi. 3; Rom. xiv. 13.

[f] 1 Thess. v. 14; Eph. v. 11; Levit. xix. 17.

upon him; not hindering his progress in it, not endeavouring his conversion from it: but reproof is an overt act; involving somewhat of openness and plain freedom, such as the Wise Man doth prefer before close good-will; for, *Open rebuke* (saith he) *is better than secret love.*[g]

We are all thus far *the keepers of our brethren*, and it is a charge incumbent on us, by all good means to preserve them from the worst of mischiefs.

In fine, there is plainly nothing more inconsistent with true charity, than such a compliance with sin or neglect of duty in the sight of our neighbour, which is scandalous, or may prove contagious to him; for how can we love him, whose chief good, whose eternal welfare, we do not tender? whom we do not fear to seduce into the way of extreme misery, or do not at least care to lead into the way of happiness? whom without any check we can suffer to forfeit the best goods, and to incur the saddest calamities?

Wherefore, if the love of ourselves and a sober regard to our own welfare be not sufficient to induce us, yet a charitable disposition and a concernedness for our neighbour (for our brethren, our relations, our friends) should move us to a good, innocent, virtuous, fruitful, and exemplary conversation; if we do not care to save ourselves, yet let it pity us to damn and destroy others by our negligence.[h]

III. But if charity will not move us, yet justice, exacting from us a care of our good conversation before men, should constrain us thereto.

Exemplary and edifying conversation is a debt which we owe to the world, a good office imposed on us by the laws of common humanity.

When without our own hurt or inconvenience we can do considerable good to our neighbour, he hath a title thereto (granted by the common Author of our nature, the absolute Lord of all we are or have), and he may justly demand it from us; as we in like case might claim it from him, and certainly would in matters agreeable to our humour expect it: wherefore seeing good conversation not only doth not harm or incommode us, but is most beneficial to ourselves, and it exceedingly may benefit our neighbour, it is most just that we should afford it to him; it is no more than fair dealing to do it; to neglect it, is a real injury to him.

To set ill example before our neighbour, or (which is in part and in effect the same) to withhold good example from him (for not to give a good example is a bad thing, and so a bad example; this), I say, is plainly a great iniquity, and a wrong to him. For,

Is it not an injury to offer a cup of poison to any man, to invite him to drink it, to be his taster of it, so drawing him to take it off without suspicion or fear of deadly mischief? is it not an injury to forbear warning him thereof, or not to deter him from it, when it standeth before him, and he is ready to put it to his mouth? would not such a man in all conscionable esteem pass for a murderer of his neighbour?

Is it not a great wrong to carry any man out of his way (out of a right, easy, fair, and safe road) into mazes, thickets, and sloughs, or into intricate, foul, dangerous by-ways? Is it not wrongful, when he doth wander or err, not to reduce him thence, not to set him in the right way?

Is it not very foul dealing to bring a man to a steep precipice, and thence to leap down before him? is it not so, not to stop him, when he is on the brink, and blindly moving forward to cast himself down headlong?

If these be injurious dealings, then palpably it is far more such to yield any enticements or encouragements, yea not to put obstructions, if we are able, to our neighbour's incurring sin, which to his soul is all those things; the most baneful venom, the most woful exorbitancy, the most pernicious gulf that can be.

We *by sinning* do not only, as the Wise Man saith, *wrong our own souls*,[i] but we do also wrong the souls of others; drawing them or driving them, by the efficacious impulse of our example, into mischief and misery; for, *When* (saith St. Paul) *ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ*:[j] he there speaketh of bad example; the which he not only affirmeth to be sinful in regard of Christ, but calleth it sinning against our breth-

[g] Prov. xxii. 5. [h] Rom. xiv. 15. [i] Prov. viii. 36. [j] 1 Cor. viii. 12.

ren;* and supposeth that we thereby do wound or smite their conscience;† which to do is surely no less wrong to them, than if we should assault, beat, and wound their bodies; the wounds of conscience being of all most grievous, and producing most insupportable affliction; according to that of the Wise Man, *The spirit of a man will bear his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?*[k]

Indeed, by thus hurting our neighbour, we do him a wrong, not only very great in itself, but such as may probably be irreparable, for which hardly we can ever be able to make him any restitution or compensation; for a better example scarce will reach all whom a bad example hath touched; the best example hardly will avail to undo that which a bad example hath done; if thereby we have engaged our neighbour in sin, we by no means can restore his lost innocence, or prevent his saying, *Wo be to me, for I have sinned:*[l] it will be very difficult to recover him into that state (that sound condition of soul) from which we did move him; it will however cost him, if not a final ruin, yet a sore repentance; the pangs whereof no compensation which we can yield will requite:[m] the wounds which we thereby do inflict may rankle and prove incurable; they assuredly will find no easy cure; they must however either in consequence or in the correction be very painful; and they will leave an ugly scar behind them.

The injustice of this practice may also further appear upon divers special accounts.

All men esteem pity a debt which one man oweth to another, as liable to grief and misery (the obligation whereto is written in the bowels of each man;) which pity will incline to succour the object of it in danger or distress; wherefore every man by the natural law is bound to endeavour the prevention or the rescue of another falling into mischief; according to that of St. Jude, *Of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;*[n] whence, to draw men into sin by ill practice, or not to restrain them from it by good, is unjust, as a pitiless, hard-hearted, cruel thing.*

Again: All men hold flattery to be a practice very abusive, or more than simply wrongful; as with injury joining contempt and cozenage; taking advantage of a man's infirmity to work prejudice to him; it is indeed a mischievous, a pernicious, and withal a perfidious, an insidious, an ensnaring practice; for, *A flattering mouth* (saith the Wise Man) *worketh ruin;* and, *A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet:*[o] but flattery is not only verbal; the worst flattery is not that whereby men soothe and gloze with their lips, encouraging others by fictitious commendations to persist in bad courses; there as a tacit flattery, when by our connivance at sin we seem to approve it; there is a real flattery, when by our compliance with sin we recommend it to our comrades; these do not look so grossly, yet do insinuate into our mind, and commonly do inveigle to sin more effectually; men being more apt to trust our deeds than our words, being more pleased in our vouching their actions by a participation in them, and running a common hazard with them, than in our straining to commend or to excuse them: whence it is, that gross flattery hath its effects chiefly upon simpler folks, but this subtile flattery doth often gull and abuse persons of greatest capacity.

Again: A good conversation before men is a part of that due respect which we owe to them. There is a regard and a kind of reverence to be had toward every man; which should engage us to behave ourselves decently in his presence, signifying a consideration and esteem of his person, of his opinion, of his resentment, of his affection toward us: to do any foul or unhandsome thing is a contempt of him, a rudeness toward him, an affront put on him; whereby in effect we do slight, disparage, and reproach him; implying, that we do little value his judgment; that we care not for his goodwill; that we persume he hath not the

* Ὁ γὰρ ἁμαρτάνων ἐπὰν εἴδῃ τινα ὅμοια αὐτῷ δρῶντα οἰκοδομηθήσεται εἰς τὸ τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖν.—Const. Ap. ii. 17.

† Τύπτοντες αὐτῶν τὴν συνείδησιν ἀσθενοῦσαι——

[k] Prov. xviii. 14.

[l] Lam. v. 16.

[m] 1 Cor. viii. 11.

[n] Jude 22, 23.

* 1 Sam. iii. 13,—(His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.)

[o] Prov. xxxi. 30, Favour is deceitful.—Prov. xxvi. 28; xxix. 5.

sense to discern, or hath not the spirit to dislike, or must have the patience to comport with our unseemly and unsavoury carriage. And if to do other unhandsome things before men is such an indignity offered to them, then it is especially such to commit sin before them, which is the most ugly, the most sordid, the most loathsome behaviour that can be; there is no deformity, no turpitude in nature, comparable to sin; nothing so offensive, so distasteful, so abominable to a rational sense; so that the Wise Man's saying is very true, taken any way, *He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth*:[p] it is both a sin to contemn him, and sinning is an argument of contempt toward him; nor can we better observe St. Peter's injunction, that we *honour all men*,[q] than by forbearing to sin in their presence, out of respect to them. But further,

IV. Let us consider, that a good conversation before men is a public benefit, a great advantage to the world and common state of men.

It is not only a good office of charity to this or that man; but it layeth a general obligation on our country, on our age, on posterity itself; upon which a fruitful life, an exemplary virtue, may have notable influence.

As notorious sin is a plague to the world, throwing infection and death about it; provoking the wrath of Heaven, and thence deriving vengeance on it; so, notable virtue is a general blessing, producing most wholesome and comfortable effects to mankind.

For how can one more oblige the public, than by conferring help to uphold the reputation, and to propagate the entertainment of those things, which are the main props of the world, for the sake of which it standeth, and by the means of which it is sustained; than by preserving the virtue and power of conscience, which is the band of all society, the guardian of faith and honesty, the best insurer of justice, order, and peace in the state (that which *exalteth a nation*, and *establisheth a kingdom*;[r]) than by producing and promoting those things which certainly will procure the favour and blessing of God on any people?

How can a man better deserve of the world, than by concurring to stop the contagion of sin, and the overspreading deluge of iniquity, together with all the lamentable mischiefs consequent on them; than by averting the fierce wrath and severe judgments of God, which a general prevalence of wickedness necessarily will bring down?

Most men pretend to be concerned even for the honour of their country; and how can we better promote that than by checking the progress of *sin*, which will not only be the bane, but *is*, as Solomon telleth us, *the reproach of any people*?[s]

It may possibly be, it hath really been, that the conspicuous virtue of a few men (yea sometimes of one single person) hath leavened a country, hath seasoned an age, hath imbued posterity with an admiration of goodness, and with an affection to it. (*One man*, saith St. Chrysostom, *inflamed with zeal, may suffice to reform an entire people.**) So among the pagans one person did set up the study of morality, and worthily was styled *the parent of* (that most useful) *philosophy*;† whereby he did exceedingly benefit mankind, and did confer much toward preparing men for the reception of our heavenly philosophy.

Such our Lord designed his apostles to be; for, *Ye* (saith he) *are the lights of the world, ye are the salt of the earth*;[t] and such in effect they did prove, *God by them* (as St. Paul saith) *manifesting the savour of his knowledge in every place*;[u] they not only by their heavenly doctrine, but chiefly by the lustre and influence of their holy example, converting the world from impious errors and naughty practices unto true religion and virtuous conversation; they did lead men to goodness not only by the ears, but by the eyes, seeing their excellent life, and *walking as they had them for ensamples.*[v]

It consequently may be, yea hath been, that the singular integrity of one, or of a few persons, displaying itself, hath appeased divine wrath, and hath staved off

p Prov. xiv. 21; xi. 12.
q 1 Pet. ii. 17.
r Prov. xiv. 34; xx. 28.

* Ἀρκεῖ εἷς ἄνθρωπος ζήλῳ πεπυρωμένος ὁλόκληρον διορθώσασθαι δῆμον.—Chrys. ἀνδρ. α'.
† Socrates philosophiæ parens.—*Cic.*
s Prov. xiv. 34.
t Matt. v. 13, 14.
u 2 Cor. ii. 14.
v Phil. iii. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 1; iv. 16; 2 Thess. iii. 7, 9.

imminent ruin from a people. So one Noah, publicly maintaining and *preaching righteousness*,[w] did preserve the whole race of men from extirpation; so ten persons avowing righteousness would have kept Sodom from that rueful destruction;[x] so one good man (notably owning God, and interposing for the concerns of piety) might have prevented that calamitous vengeance which fell upon Israel; as Jeremy told before, and Ezekiel affirmed after it: *Run ye to and fro* (saith God in Jeremy) *through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth, and I will pardon it:*[y] and, *I sought for a man*, (saith God in Ezekiel) *among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none; therefore have I poured mine indignation upon them:*[z] there was then *a remnant* of those who closely did serve God; and perhaps *seven thousand* unknown persons, who had not in their hearts deserted religion;[a] but this did not avert God's wrath, or preserve the nation from captivity; as a few openly professing and resolutely practising goodness might have done.

Now who would not be glad of being so public a friend, so general a benefactor, in performing that which doth otherwise so much become him, and so greatly behove him; yielding him the best ornaments and highest advantages even upon his private account? who would not be ambitious both to oblige his country, and to save his own soul together, by a worthy conversation?

Assuredly nothing can be devised more conducible to the effecting a reformation and amendment of the world (and consequently to the prosperity and felicity of mankind here), than a conspiracy of good men in a frank and brisk avowing of goodness in the face of the world.

V. A care of our conversation in the sight of men is needful for the preservation of our good name and fair repute among them.

A good name in holy scripture is represented as a special gift and blessing of God, bestowed in recompense of piety and virtue, and preferred before other most considerable gifts and blessings concerning our external state;[b] for, *By humility* (saith the Wise man) *and the fear of the Lord are riches and honour;* both are the rewards of piety; but comparing them, *A good name* (saith he) *is rather to be chosen than great riches;*[c] it cannot therefore be a contemptible thing, nor ought it to be neglected by us; for none of God's gifts, no reward which he proposeth, ought to be slighted.

Reason and experience also do concur in showing that a good repute is a valuable thing, not only as a fair ornament of our persons, and a commodious instrument of action toward our private welfare, as a guard of our safety and quiet, as serving to procure divers conveniences of life; but as very advantageous, very useful upon moral and spiritual accounts; qualifying us with greater ease and efficacy to serve God, and to do good; for indeed it is manifest, that without it we shall be uncapable of doing God or man any considerable service.

Wherefore in duty and wisdom we should be careful of preserving this jewel; the which we cannot otherwise do, than by observing this apostolic rule, of *providing things honest in the sight of all men;* for a good conversation is the only guard and convoy of a good name: how can men conceive good opinion of us otherwise than from a view of worthy qualities and good deeds? They may charitably hope, but they cannot confidently judge well of us otherwise than upon good evidence: *Ye shall know them by their fruits;*[d] (that is, by apparent works, falling under human cognizance), is the rule whereby our Saviour teacheth us to distinguish of men, and to build a right opinion concerning them. Honour is the shadow, the inseparable attendant of conspicuous virtue.

A good conversation will indeed command esteem, and irresistibly extort respect from all men.

Wise and good men heartily will approve it, and gladly will yield it due

[w] 2 Pet. ii. 5.
[x] Gen. xviii. 32.
[y] Jer. v. 1.
[z] Ezek. xxii. 30.
[a] Isa. i. 9; 1 Kings xix. 14, 18.
[b] 1 Chron. xxix. 12; Eccl. vi. 2; (Eccl. vii. 1.)
[c] Prov. xxii. 4; (Psal. cxii. 9;) Prov. xxii. 1.
[d] Matt. vii. 16; xii. 33.

commendation; they cannot but honour it whenever they see it, as best suiting with their own judgment and with their affection.[e]

Yea it will procure respect even from the worst men; for it is a mistake to think that bad men really do or can despise true goodness: in truth, however they may pretend or make a show to slight and scorn it, however in words they may flout and revile it, yet in their hearts they cannot but admire and reverence it; although their will may be so perverted as to set them against it, yet their reason cannot be so destroyed (or natural light so quenched in them) as to disapprove it; they do but vilely dissemble, and belie their conscience, when they make as if they did condemn or contemn it: *As* (saith St. Chrysostom) *they who openly do flatter ill livers, do in their mind reprove them; so they who envy the workers of good, in their conscience will admire and approve them:** at least they will do thus in their sober mind; when with any serious application they do reflect on things; when the eye of their soul is anywise cleared from the mists of lust and passion: it is not to be heeded what they say in a fluster or ranting mood, when they are near out of their wits, and have their judgment stifled by sensual imaginations; but what they think when their mind is somewhat composed, and natural light doth shine freely in it.

Indeed such wretches really do most despise those who consort and comply with them in sinful follies; as they cannot in their hearts honour themselves, so they cannot esteem those whom they find like unto them; especially they despise those whom they observe to be so base and silly, as against their own judgment and conscience to fear their displeasure, or to regard their censure; looking upon them as vassals to their humour, and renegadoes from their own conscience.

Moreover a good conversation certainly will engage Almighty God to protect our reputation, and to confer honour upon us. For he, as Governor of the world, the Patron of goodness, the Dispenser of proper rewards to all, is in a manner bound to encourage those openly who visibly do own him and take his part, who promote his glory and interest, who pay him due service and obedience, who in regard to his authority do faithfully pursue that which is right and good; he surely will see fit to repay such in the same kind, by openly acknowledging, countenancing, and honouring them: accordingly he hath tied himself to do so by his express word and promise: for, *Them* (saith he) *that honour me I will honour; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed:*[f] he said it in reference to old Eli, who had neglected the duty of *restraining his sons* from sin; which is a case very much of kin to all neglect of exemplary piety. And, *Whosoever* (saith our Lord) *shall confess me before men, shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God:*[g] the which (one most comfortable, the other most terrible) sentences are to be understood, He that confesseth our Lord not merely by verbal profession (for divers such who *say*, *Lord*, *Lord*, he will not so much as *know* at the final judgment), but in real practice;[h] he that denieth him, not only by renouncing him with the tongue, but by disobeying him in scandalous conversation, by working iniquity, by the apostacy of bad manners.

VI. Lastly; The public discharge of a good conscience will yield manifold advantages and great benefits to ourselves; not only as good (and thence needful to our salvation and our comfort) but as public; some of which I shall touch.

Such a practice will much secure and strengthen us in goodness; for he that hath the heart with resolution and constancy to do well, notwithstanding any worldly discouragement, although he thereby doth cross the humour of the world, and incurreth the displeasure, envy, hatred, censure, and obloquy of men, he thus having exalted his virtue above the favour and fear of the world, hath set it in a safe place, hath rendered it impregnable.

* Οἱ ἐν βασκανίᾳ τοῦτο ποιοῦντες, κατὰ τὸ συνειδὸς ὑμᾶς θαυμάσονται, καὶ ἀποδέξονται· ὥσπερ οὖν οἱ φανερῶς κολακεύοντες τοὺς ἐν πονηρίᾳ ζῶντας, κατὰ νοῦν διαβάλλουσι.—Chrys. in Matt. v. 16.

[e] Rom. xiv. 18.

[f] 1 Sam. ii. 30.

[g] Luke xii. 8.

[h] Matt. vii. 22, 23.

The consideration of having attained so happy and so worthy a victory over the most dangerous temptations (the victory of faith over the world) will be very comfortable;[i] and the sufferings which (from the disfavour, enmity, and opposition of men) do attend such a practice, being a kind of martyrdom, will yield all the joys and comforts (together with the hopes and rewards) of an heroical patience.

It will afford great satisfaction of mind to reflect on the consequences of such a practice; and to consider that our resolution hath engaged or confirmed others in goodness, hath preserved them from sin, hath withdrawn them from bad courses, and saved them from perdition; that we have been instrumental to the salvation and happiness of any soul; that, beside our own sins (which are a burden too heavy for any man well to bear), we have not the sins of others to account for, and shall not be loaded with the guilt of those whom our neglect of duty, our compliance with sin, our stupid coldness and indifference in regard to spiritual affairs, our dissimulation or connivance at the scandalous violation of God's honour, and transgression of his laws, might have encouraged in sin; that we are not liable to that reproof in the prophet, *Ye have stengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way.*[j]

We shall highly oblige those whom by our good endeavour or example we shall convert to righteousness, or reclaim from iniquity, or shall anywise stop in their career to ruin; who when they shall recover from their error, and soberly reflect on their case (when they shall ἀνανήφειν, become again sober, getting out, as it were, of their drunken fit,[k]) will heartily thank us, will bless us, will pray for us, as having laid on them a very great obligation, and done them the greatest kindness that could be; so that they will be ready to say to us, as David did to Abigail, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent thee this day to meet me: and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from shedding of blood:*[l] this will be the consequence of plain dealing in such cases, and that will be fulfilled which the Wise Man saith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.*[m]

We thereby shall escape the sore complaints and fell curses of those whom our naughty or careless demeanour hath involved in sinful practice; for when their conscience is awakened into a sense of their guilt, when they feel the stings of remorse, when they perceive the extreme damage and wo which they have incurred, then will they discharge their resentments of heart against those who have anywise been accessary to their fall into such a condition; then in their bitterness of soul, in the agony of their sorrow and perplexity, they will be apt to exclaim, Cursed be the day that I knew such an one, or that I did converse with him, who did betray me into this plight, who did inveigle me into temptation, who did not pluck me back from that sinful practice by which I now so deeply suffer; cursed be his base cowardice, his fond modesty, his affected wisdom, his treacherous negligence, his unconscionable indifference, his impious want of zeal for God's honour and charity for my soul, which did keep him from checking me in my bad courses and reclaiming me to my duty by wholesome reproof, by seasonable advice, by exemplary practice before me: it will surely be a great comfort to us, that we have not given occasion for such complaints; but in proportion may say with St. Paul, *I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*[n]

It is also no small advantage to us, that by a good conversation we shall procure the particular friendship and affection of good men; for it is that which discovereth good men to one another, which kindleth their affection toward each other, which draweth them together, and breedeth a familiarity between them, and knitteth their hearts together in a holy love; from whence they come to enjoy the faithful advice, the kind assistance, the seasonable consolation, and the hearty prayers of each other; the which great

[i] 1 John v. 4.
[j] Ezek. xiii. 22.
[k] 2 Tim. ii. 26.
[l] 1 Sam. xxv. 32.
[m] Prov. xxviii. 23; xxvii. 6; xix. 25.
[n] Acts xx. 26; Ezek. vii. 17; xxxiii. 7.

benefits are lost by concealment of ourselves, and reservedness in doing good; for how can any man know him to deserve love, whose goodness is not discernible?

Such considerations may induce all persons, of every rank and condition, to observe this apostolical precept, so far as their capacities do reach; I shall only adjoin, that it especially doth concern persons of quality, in proportion to their eminency in dignity, power, authority, reputation, or any peculiar advantage, whereby the beneficial efficacy of good conversation is increased.

Such persons are like *a city seated on a mountain, which cannot be hid;*[o] the height of their station and lustre of their quality do expose them to the observation of all; and their authority doth recommend their practice to the imitation of observers.

Their example cannot fail of having a mighty influence; its light doth guide men, its weight doth sway them; it doth seem to warrant and authorize practice; inferiors would be afraid or ashamed to discost from it.

They have not the temptations which other men have to comply with sin out of fear, out of complaisance, out of design; they being to lead and give law, not to follow or receive it; they being the first movers in conversation; the fashion being regulated by them, or indeed being merely a conformity to their deportment.

They should by their innocence qualify themselves to reprove others with authority and courage.[p]

They in gratitude to God, who hath bestowed on them such advantages, are obliged to employ them for his service.

They particularly were designed and endowed with those advantages, that by them they might countenance, might encourage, might reward, might by all means promote goodness in the world.[q]

They accordingly are responsible for the influence their conversation hath; so that in the final account most actions of men will lie at their door, so that they shall respectively be either highly rewarded for the virtues and good works, or severely punished for the vices and sins of mankind: the which most weighty consideration I leave by God's grace to be seriously applied by them who are concerned therein.

SERMON LXVI.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF ALL MEN.

2 Cor. viii. 21.—*Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

If we observe the world, we may easily therein discern many persons, who being inwardly well disposed (standing right both in judgment and affection to goodness) are yet loath to appear very good, and hardly will own Christian virtue in the constant discharge of public duties, or in strict abstinence from sinful practices; but commonly (against the dictate of their reason, and sense of their heart) neglect the one, and comply with the other: an odd sort of hypocrites or dissemblers; who studiously conceal their better part, and counterfeit themselves worse than they are; who adore God in their hearts, and address devotions to him in their closets, but scarce will avow him in their visible profession and practice; who have a conscience, but are shy of disclosing it, or letting it take air, and walk in open light, confining it as a criminal to close restraint or obscure retirement; who gladly would be religious and staunch, if there might be no notice taken of it, but take care of being remarkable (or as it were scandalous) for it; who think fit to compromise and compound the business between God and the world, maintaining a neutrality and correspondence with both, so as privately to court the one, and publicly to close with the other.

Such practice is flatly repugnant to that rule, which otherwhere in precept, and here by his own example, the holy apostle doth recommend to us;[r] directing us not only *before God* (that is, in our heart, and in our secret retirements, which God alone doth behold), but also

[o] Matt. v. 14.
[p] Const. Apost. ii. 17.
[q] Rom. xiii. 3-6; 1 Pet. ii. 14.
[r] Rom. xii. 17.

before men, that is, in our external and visible conversation, carefully to perform things good and laudable, eschewing whatever is bad or culpable.

Our obligation to which rule hath already been confirmed by divers other precepts in holy scripture, concurring in the injunction of it; and its observance urged by various positive considerations of great weight and force (declaring how necessary it is for promoting God's honour and glory, how requisite it is for maintaining the dignity of our profession, and advancing the interests of goodness, how charity and justice toward our neighbour do exact it from us, how conducible it is to the public benefit of mankind, and how advantageous in many respects to our own particular welfare;) and not insisting further upon those considerations, I shall now only enforce it by scanning the common principles, grounds, motives, pretences, or excuses of the contrary practice, which I before touched, of openly deserting virtue, or declining the performance of duty before men; and by showing how very foolish and vain, how very naughty and base, how very mischievous, dangerous, and pernicious they are.

They chiefly are those which I shall immediately touch and reflect upon.

1. Men commonly in their visible conversation do neglect their duty, or comply with sin out of modesty; because they are ashamed of doing that which may expose them to some disgrace or censure; because virtuous practice may raise distaste in the company, and provoke the scorn of those with whom they converse; because such a point of duty is out of request, and slighted in the world; they are *afraid of men's faces;*[b] their tender forehead cannot sustain derision, or endure to be flouted for being out of the mode, and wearing an uncouth garb of conscience.

But this plainly is a perverse and unmanly modesty; a fond, a vile, a shameful shame: fie on it! should any man be ashamed of that which is his chief beauty, his best ornament, his sole dignity and glory? should a man be ashamed of being evidently wise in his conduct, of following his reason, of consulting his true interest, of pursuing his own certain welfare and felicity? is it fit that any man should be ashamed of paying due acknowledgment, of yielding due reverence, of rendering due gratitude, of performing due service to his Creator, sovereign Lord, and great Benefactor; to whom he oweth all, upon whose will he entirely dependeth, at whose absolute disposal he is? Surely these are no shameful things, but such rather wherein we ought to have the greatest confidence, which we ought to perform with the greatest assurance.

If we are bashful, let us be so in regard to things which are truely shameful; let us be ashamed of sin, that is, of our most real deformity, our turpitude, our disgrace, our wretchedness; the which indeed is the only dishonourable and despicable thing; the which did first produce shame, and did introduce it into the world (for while innocence did abide, there was no shame), and the which will ever carry shame along as its inseparable adherent:[c] it would indeed become us to blush at our horrible unworthiness and detestable ingratitude toward our bountiful Lord, and most gracious Redeemer; it were proper for us to be confounded at our extreme folly and foul treachery toward ourselves, in betraying our souls to guilt, to regret, to wrath and punishment: who should be ashamed, who not, the holy Psalmist hath well taught us, *Let none that wait on thee be ashamed; let them be ashamed which transgress without cause;* and, *Let the proud be ashamed*—but *let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.*[d]

It is true modesty to be ashamed of doing unworthy and unhandsome things; but to be ashamed of doing what reason and duty require, is pitiful weakness of mind.

We do not owe so much regard to vicious and vain persons, as to be dashed out of countenance by them; we should rather by our masculine resolution and upright confidence put them to confusion.[e]

If shame be an evil which we would avoid, the only remedy thereof we may learn from those words of the Psalmist,

[b] Jer. i. 8.

[c] Gen. iii. 2; ii. 25.
[d] Psal. xxv. 3; cxix. 78-80.
[e] Tit. ii. 8.

Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to thy testimonies:[f] but it is a fond course to shun disgrace by doing that which alone deserveth it.

Is it not also a wild thing to seem modest toward men, while we are really so bold with God, as presumptuously to offend him, to affront him, *to provoke him* (as those in the prophet did) *to his face?*[g] for so indeed every sinner doth; and as it is the greatest inadvertency not to consider God alway present with us, so it is the height of impudence to sin in his presence, or to prefer a regard to men before the reverence due to his eye.*

Is it not also great folly for declining a little present transient disgrace, to do that whereof afterward we shall be grievously and perpetually ashamed;[h] which we shall never remember or reflect upon without confusion (according to that of the apostle, *What fruit had ye of those things whereof ye are now ashamed?*) the consequence whereof is our standing obnoxious to *shame and everlasting contempt.*[i]

If we be thus ashamed of God, and of our duty to him, may he not justly in recompense be ashamed of us, and disdain to own us in favour and mercy? He will surely; he hath often declared so: *Whosoever* (saith our Lord) *shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.*[j]

2. Another principle, near of kin to the former, disposing men to commit sin, or waive duty, in their open conversation, is fear of loosing the good-will, or getting the ill-will, of men.

It must often happen, that whoever will be virtuous, and stick to his duty, will forfeit the favour of men, will incur their displeasure, will provoke their indignation; by crossing their humour and conceit, by implicitly slighting their opinion, and condemning their practice: this is the portion and fate of strict and stiff piety; the friendship of God and the world are not well consistent; and St. Paul's rule may be converted, *If I should please men, I should not be the servant of Christ:*[k] hence men prizing the favour of men with the advantages of it, and dreading their anger, hatred, disdain, with the mischiefs consequent on them, are scared from their duty. But in truth this is a silly, a base, a sorry fear, arguing wretched meanness of spirit, and pitiful cowardice. For,

Dost thou, fond wretch, fear to lose the favour of man, whose favour doth avail nothing to thy main interests, and cannot anywise considerably benefit thee (for in no respect dost thou depend on his will and providence), but dost not fear being deprived of God's favour, upon which all thy good hangeth, wherein thy felicity consisteth, without which thou art uncapable of any prosperity, of any security, of any joy or comfort?

Dost thou fear the displeasure of man, of poor impotent man, a sorry frail *worm*, whose *breath is his nostrils*[l] (ready to fly away in every moment), whose anger can do thee no real harm, whose power can hardly touch thee, can nowise reach thy soul or its concerns;[m] whilst thou dreadest not to offend the eternal, almighty God, under whose feet thou liest, ready to be crushed into nothing, or stamped down into hell at his pleasure?

Darest thou not, O heartless dastard, to do that which is in thy power easily to do, which thou art infinitely concerned to do, which upon so many accounts thou art obliged to do, out of fear to cross thine equal, yea, far thine inferior in this case? for he that standeth to his duty, as he hath the better cause, so he hath the greater force, and assuredly will defeat all his opposers.

Art thou, O pusillanimous slave, in regard to any creature, thy fellow-subject and servant, afraid of expressing thy loyalty to thy sovereign Lord, thy love to infinite goodness, thy gratitude to thy best friend and kindest benefactor, thy reverence toward the divine majesty, thine awe of uncontrollable power? is this a reasonable, an excusable, a tolerable fear?

* Quid quæso rationis habet verecundari ad diem hominis, et vultum Dei non vereri?—*Bern. Ep.* 108.

[f] Psal. cxix. 6.
[g] Isa. lxv. 3; Jer. vi. 17; viii. 12.
[h] Wisd. iv. 20.
[i] (Jer. xxii. 22;) Rom. vi. 21; Dan. xii. 2.
[j] Luke ix. 26; xii. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 12.
[k] James iv. 4; 1 John ii. 15; Gal. i. 10.
[l] Job xxv. 6; Isa. ii. 22.
[m] Matt. x. 28.

Surely if ever to be driven out of heart is reproachful, if ever to be cowed doth argue infirmity and abjectness of spirit, it is in this case; when we have all the reason and obligation in the world to be most courageous and resolute, to fear no colours, to make our party good against all opposition; when we have the greatest necessity to engage us, and the greatest advantage to encourage us to hold out stoutly; the greatest necessity, seeing all that we have, our life, our salvation, our eternal weal, doth lie at stake; *for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life:*[n] the greatest advantage, for that if we will, we are invincible, and assured of an easy victory, seeing we take part with God, and have omnipotency on our side; so that we can say with David, *The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me: The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?*[o]

There is not, indeed, to those who are under God's special protection, and confide in him, any thing in nature really formidable or terrible: it is his peculiar attribute to be the mighty and terrible One; he recommendeth himself to us as *our fear*, that is, the special object of it; we therefore do sacrilegiously wrong him, by fearing any other thing, in such cases of competition, and when we are concerned to fear him; whence then we are prohibited to fear the greatest powers in the world: *fear not them which kill the body* (if God permit them), *but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.*[p]

Who (saith St. Peter) *is he that will* (or that can) *harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?*—wherefore *be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*[q] (by a pure confidence in him.)

In such cases, we should be ready to accost the greatest potentates in terms like those of the three brave youths in Daniel: *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But* (however) *if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship thy golden image which thou hast set up.*[r] And if, in imitation of so worthy an example, we should defy the wrath of the greatest kings, demanding any sinful compliance from us, how poor a thing is it to fear the displeasure of sorry companions enticing us to the like! how much more should we defy all the crew of hectorly ruffians and huffing braggadocios!

While wicked profane men are so bold and stout in impugning goodness, we should be courageous in defence of it. *The righteous is as bold as a lion.*[s]

The fear of God (which is most reasonable and prudent, and consistent with the bravest courage) should exclude the fear of men; the which is no less vain than base; the which indeed doth involve the wildest boldness, and most rash foolhardiness in the world, pushing us into the most desperate adventures that can be; while by sinning we incense the most dreadful anger, we invade the most formidable power, we incur the most horrible dangers, we run headlong into the jaws of death and hell: such a mixture there is of base cowardice and mad audacity in practices issuing from that principle.

3. Men commonly do neglect the open practice of virtue out of care to decline envey; for ill men seeing others endowed with worthy qualities, which they want; performing good deeds from which their infirmity or pravity doth hold them averse; entitled to commendations, rewards, and advantages to which they cannot aspire, and whereby they seem to eclipse their credit, or impair their interest, or expose their unworthiness; cannot look on such persons without an *evil eye*, or without conceiving in their heart malevolent grudges at them, which they will be apt to vent in spiteful practices, endeavouring to supplant or blast their vir-

[n] Deut. xxxii. 47.

[o] Psal. cxviii. 6; Heb. xiii. 6; Psal. lvi. 11; xi. 4; xxvii. 1, 3; xlvi. 2; Jer. i. 8; xx. 11; Isa. xli. 10; Gen. xxvi. 24; xv. 1.

[p] Num. xiv. 9; Deut. xxxi. 8; 2 Chron. xx. 17; Jer. v. 22; x. 7; Rev. xv. 4; Deut. vii. 21; x. 17; xxviii. 58; Psal. lxxvi. 7, 11; xciv. 3; Isa. viii. 12; xli. 10; Matt. x. 26, 28.

[q] 1 Pet. iii. 13, 14.

[r] Dan. iii. 16-18.

[s] Prov. xxviii. 1.

tue; men are apt to envy the favourites of God, as they are of princes. Nor indeed doth any thing more powerfully incite men to hurt their neighbour than such malignity, being edged by that anguish which their sore eye doth feel:* to shun which envy, and its mischievous effects, men commonly are tempted to withdraw its cause, their own virtue, that its bright lustre may not wound the sight of such neighbours.

But thus to appease envy by deserting virtue is very fond and absurd. For,

Shall I cast away my best goods, because another would not have me to enjoy them? shall I be terribly sick, to cure another's distempered fancy? shall I render myself miserable, because another doth not like to see me happy? because he doth want charity, must I forego innocence? because he doth not love me, shall I hate myself? to please him merely, without bettering him, to ease him of a wholesome smart, shall I displease God, and abuse myself?

Would he not be a silly man, who being envied because he seemeth a favourite of his prince, would, to gratify such enviers offend his prince? No, surely: this is too fond a regard unto any man's base disposition, this is too great a gratification of an enemy's pleasure, this is too slavish a depression of a man's self: rather let him fret, let him torment himself, let him inflict a just punishment on his own uncharitable and unworthy humour; whereby perhaps he may be reduced to discern his folly and correct his fault.

Would any man upon such terms part with his estate, mar his business, slur his reputation, or purposely play the fool? would any man become poor, infamous, or contemptible, because to be rich, to be prosperous, to be honourable, to be wise, are invidious things? Much less should a man upon that account neglect his duty, thereby betraying his soul, discarding the love and favour of God, destroying the satisfaction of his conscience, and forfeiting his hopes of felicity: damages and mischiefs comparable to which all the envy and spite in the world can nowise bring upon him.

* Invidiam placare paras virtute relicta? Contemnere miser.—*Hor. Serm.* ii. 3.

If we would avoid envy, we should not do it by incurring a worse evil, and rendering ourselves contemptible for unworthiness; we should rather damp it by modesty, humility, an inoffensive tenour of life.

We should surmount it, and quash it by constant blameless conversation: the which will kill the envious or the envy.

An unquestionable virtue will stop the mouth of detraction, and drive envy into corners, not daring to show itself against it.

4. A common principle, from whence neglect of duty and commission of sin in visible conversation doth spring, is a fear of infamy and reproach, whereto the strict practice of virtue is liable; men not enduring to bear the odious censures, the foul imputations, the ugly characters, the scurvy epithets, and opprobious names, wherewith the bold and spiteful enemies of goodness are wont to asperse and brand its faithful adherents.

To be deemed weak, credulous, superstitious, formal, timorous, nice, squeamish, scrupulous, strait-laced, conceited, affected, cross, surly, morose, froward, stubborn, pertinacious, proud:

To be termed a foppish simpleton, doting on speculations, and enslaved to rules; a fantastical humourist, a precise bigot, a rigid stoic, a demure sneaksby, a clownish singularist, or nonconformist to ordinary usage, a stiff opiniatre; a man of a pitiful narrow spirit, pent up within a small compass, confined by principles, fettered by laws, living in bondage to his conscience:

These and the like harsh censures, foul reproaches, and abusive scoffs, even all which invention quickened by envy, choler, rancorous spite, and aided by the malicious fiend, can suggest, wherewith the profane crew of men usually do conspire to daub and persecute those who refuse to comply with their unconscionable extravagances and impieties, men can hardly brook;[t] and thence to shun them yield up all, cross their reason, prostitute their conscience, violate all their obligations; choosing rather to be justly reproachable for bad actions, than unjustly reproached for good.

But with such a person, who is thus diverted from his duty, let me expostulate.

[t] Psal. lvii. 3, 4.

Dost thou well to regard what unbridled tongues out of a wanton mind and corrupt heart do sputter and foam? Shall thy practice depend on their loose wit or licentious talk, so that thou must do nothing which they shall not be in humour to commend?*

Wilt thou renounce all wisdom, abandon thy best interest, forfeit thy happiness, to decline a squib or a flirt?†

Would not he be a stark fool, who would be railed or jeered out of his way in travel, out of his business in traffic, out of his estate or real interest upon any occasion? and is he not evidently far more such, who will be flouted out of his duty, out of his salvation, out of any spiritual advantage? Was not the practice of David more advisable, who said, *The proud have had me in derision; yet have I not declined from thy law?*[u]

David, a great king, a man of singular courage and gallantry, a glorious hero; yet even him did bold and base people deride. Whom will not profane impudence assail? whom will not they attempt to deter from goodness?

Art thou so blind as not to discern whence it cometh that they disparage virtue? that is, from their extreme vanity and rashness, which move them to speak any thing without consideration or discretion; from their great naughtiness and weakness, their being bewitched with pleasure and besotted with vice, which engageth them to take part so furiously with them; from their malignity and spite against that which crosseth their fond humours and exorbitant lusts; from their pride, which swelleth against those who by contrary practice dissent from their folly, and reprove their wickedness, and eclipse their repute; from their envy, which repineth at thy appearing better and happier than themselves, thy excelling them in true worth, thy enjoying that satisfaction which they want, thy attaining that blessed hope to which they cannot aspire: and seeing that their reproaches do issue from such principles, wilt thou regard them?

Are their words any slander, who being professed enemies of goodness do naturally impugn it by the readiest arms they have, a virulent and petulant tongue?*

Can their dirty language, bespattering good things, alter their nature, or render that dishonourable and odious, which in itself is most excellent, most amiable, most venerable, most useful and profitable?†

Is it not indeed a commendation of virtue, which should encourage us the more to like it, to honour it, to embrace it, that vain, wild, dissolute persons, distempered in their minds, notoriously void of discretion, of integrity, of sobriety, do pretend to vilify and disgrace it?[v]‡

As their commendation is of no worth, so their reproach is less considerable.

Dost thou not disparage thine own judgment by heeding theirs, or suffering it to be of any consideration with thee in the conduct of thy life?‖

Dost thou take them to be serious in this, or to speak in good earnest, when they reproach virtue, and slight the plain dictates of reason, the clear light of natural conscience, the express commands of God, the apparent concerns of their own soul? they who are sober in nothing, how can they be serious in this, why should they seem judicious in such a case?§

Is it not evidently better to be slandered by giddy, lewd, ungodly wretches, who mind not what they say, nor care what they do, whose judgment therefore can signify nothing; than really to deserve reproof, and thence certainly to incur blame, from all staid, sober, considerate, wise, and virtuous persons, who judge advisedly and uprightly about things?¶

* Nihil est turpius, quam sapientis vitam ab insipientium sermone pendere.—*Cic. de Fin.* ii.

† Quid de te alii loquantur, ipsi videant.—*Scipio apud Cic. in Somn.*

[u] Psal. cxix. 51.

* Οὐδεὶς φαῦλος τοὺς ςπουδαίους ἐπαινεῖν ὑπομένει.—Isid. Pelus. Ep. ii. 220.

† (Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἄριστος, ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλω. Τὸ δοκεῖν οὐδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ ὄναρ ἀλλότριον.—Greg. Naz. Orat.—de sede Const.) Ant. viii. § 1.

‡ Malis displicere, laudari est.—*Sen. Excerpt.* Non potest bonus non esse, qui bonis placet; nec minus validum argumentum mihi videtur, quod bonus sit si malis displiceat.—*Bern. Ep.* 248.

‖ Quanta dementia est vereri ne infameris ab infamibus?—*Sen. Ep.* 91.

§ Moverer si judicio hoc facerent, nunc morbo faciunt.—*Sen. Exc.*

¶ Ego cum a nostro Catone laudabar, vel reprehendi me a cæteris facile patiebar.—*Cic. de Orat.*

[v] Ἄφρονες 1 Pet. ii. 15; Ἄτοποι, 2 Thess. iii. 2; Ant. iii. § 4.

Is it not better to undergo their severest censure and most biting scoffs, than to be condemned of folly and baseness by thy own mind, and reviled by thy own conscience?

Is it not infinitely better to be unjustly defamed by men, than to be disreputed by God, exposed to most disgraceful condemnation at his bar, and thrown into that state of everlasting ignominy?[w]

Is it not more tolerable to hear such language, than, having violated our duty and broken God's commands, one day to hear that dismal sentence, *Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire?*[x]*

It is a glorious infamy which one sustaineth for the sake of righteousness.†

Even heathens, with whom glory was the most ample reward and sweetest fruit of virtue, yet do enjoin that we should prefer conscience before it; and that we should rather gladly embrace infamy than forsake virtue.‡[y]

It is the lot of all good men (for probation, exercise, and improvement of their virtue) to be persecuted, at least in some times, as when St. Paul said, *All that will live godlily in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution:*[z] and surely he that sincerely loveth God would even desire occasion of suffering somewhat for his sake, in testimony of his faithful affection: but what more tolerable persecution, what more easy martyrdom could we wish, than to be lashed by a scurrilous tongue: or rather to observe the ears of others to be infested with the buzzes of detraction? what is this but a little air stirred in vain, but a mere sound or blast of wind, importing nought to him that doth not mind it, or will not be affected with it? the which surely, to a sound heart and pure conscience, cannot be very sensible: a man must have a froward temper, or a tender ear, whom a little such creaking or grating noise doth much vex;* all its force is broken, all its mischief is remedied easily, by neglect or contempt.

It is in a manner more commendable to suffer for being good, than for being a Christian; a truer martyrdom to suffer for the temper, than for the name of Christ; for doing well, than for professing truth.

Who indeed had ever been good, in any notable degree, if some had minded the opinion or the discourse of such men, whom in all times the great adversary of goodness and maligner of our welfare hath excited to deter men from virtue by thus abusing it? hath it not ever been the portion of good men to suffer in this kind?[a]

Was not our Lord himself, were not his apostles, were not all the prophets of old, were not all the heroes in goodness of all times, thus pursued with obloquy? what vile imputation, what name of reproach can be devised, wherewith the spiteful world did not besmear them?†

Yet were they much disturbed at it? were they anywise discouraged or scared by it from their duty?‡ No: they rather did find satisfaction and delight in it; it rather did heighten their mind and strengthen their resolution; it begat a gallant and triumphant disdain of such injuries, enlivening and animating them in their career of duty; they did embrace reproach for righteousness not only with content, as their proper lot and portion from God's providence, but with joy, as their special glory and happiness from divine goodness;[b] feeling it most true what our Master taught: *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Blessed are ye when men—shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.*[c] And, according to St. Peter, εἰ ὀνειδίζεσθε, *If*

* Tu ergo plus opprobria times quam tormenta? &c.—*Bern. Ep.* 108.

† Æquissimo animo ad honestum consilium per mediam infamiam tendam, &c.—*Sen. Ep.* 81.

‡ Non vis esse justus sine gloria? at mehercle sæpe justus esse debebis cum infamia.—*Sen. Ep.* 113.

[w] Dan. xii. 2. [x] Matt. xxv. 41.

[y] Ant. v. § 3; xi. 16; ix. 18.

[z] 2 Tim. iii. 12; Acts xiv. 22; Heb. xii. 6.

* Quid stultius homine verba metuente?—*Sen. Ep.* 91.

† Ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πεῖραν ἔλαβον.—Heb. xi. 36; xii. 3; Ἀναλογίσασθαι.—2 Cor. vi. 8; Διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας.

‡ Ὀνειδισμοῖς καὶ θλίψεσι θεατριζόμενοι.—Heb. x. 33.

[a] Jer. xx. 7; Psal. xliv. 16, 17; lvii. 3, 4; cxix. 51; lxix. 10; Job. xii. 4; Wisd. v. 3.

[b] Acts v. 41; 2 Cor. xii. 12. Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ὕβρεσιν—

[c] Matt. v. 11; Luke vi. 22.

ye be reproached for the name of Christ (that is, for conscionably discharging any Christian duty), *happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth on you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*[d]

In fine, it is all reason, and it is the express command of God, that in such cases we should not regard the censures or the reproaches of any mortal; it is a part of duty to despise obloquy, to expose and lose reputation for God's sake. For, *Hearken* (saith he) *unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.*[e]

5. Men commonly decline the public practice of duty out of affectation thereby to be deemed more honest and sincere, or to decline the suspicion of being hypocritical.

As this is the most obvious and usual calumny wherewith dissolute people do charge good men; so to men of generous disposition it is of all censures most poignant, as most crossing their temper: according to which as they hate to be, so they can hardly endure to be counted or called dissemblers; whence often they choose rather to seem indifferent to goodness, than zealously affected to it; they rather waive some points of duty, than, for the performance of them, expose themselves to that imputation.

But this proceeding is very unreasonable: for,

What can be more absurd, than to be really and notoriously bad (as whoever omitteth his duty is), to prevent a surmise of being such? or to be truly worse than we should be, that we may not be deemed worse than we seem?

How can we more gratify the enemy of our salvation, than by approving ourselves in truth to be what he would falsely challenge us to be, mockers of God, and traitors to our own soul?

Is it not a vain thing to regard that kind of censure which it is impossible for any man to escape, upon other terms than of being very naughty? for wicked men will never fail to load those with this charge, who will not comply with their follies, and *run with them to the same excess of riot,*[f] or are anywise better than themselves; it is inevitable for a staunch man not to be stigmatized for a hypocrite by them.

We have certainly more reason to be satisfied with the sure conscience and sense of our own integrity, than to be moved with the presumptuous assertions of any wretch devoid of justice or charity:[g] his censure, being plainly injurious and contrary to all rules of equity, which prescribe that no man should judge of things unknown or uncertain, is utterly despicable.

The testimony of God (*who is greater than our hearts*), perfectly knowing our sincerity, may abundantly support us; it is a great wrong to him for us to value the rash suspicions of men, when we are secure of his knowledge, who *seeth all our works*, and *trieth our hearts;* who hath said, that *if we commit our way to him*, and *trust in him, he will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noonday.*[h]

It is certainly better to be called hypocrite by men for doing our duty, than to be treated as a hypocrite by God for neglecting it; for all those who upon any account do violate God's laws shall *have their portion with the hypocrites* in that disconsolate place *where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.*[i] And good reason; for indeed by thus avoiding hypocrisy, we really do incur it; by seeking to preserve an opinion of sincerity, we forfeit the reality of it; by the practice of disavowing the fear of God and care of goodness, we do constitute ourselves certain hypocrites and impostors; dissembling our thoughts, smothering our conscience, deluding our neighbours with false conceits of us, feigning that indifference which we have not, pretending to act without regret or remorse, which we cannot do; seeming otherwise than we are, signifying otherwise than we mean, do-

[d] 1 Pet. iv. 14.

[e] Isa. li. 7, 8.

[f] 1 Pet. iv. 4.

[g] 2 Cor. i. 12; 1 John iii. 21.

[h] 1 John iii. 20; 1 Thess. ii. 4; Gal. i. 10; Col. iii. 23; Eph. vi. 5; 1 Cor. iv. 4; Psal. xxxviii. 5, 6.

[i] Matt. xxiv. 51.

ing otherwise than we judge fit, or like to do; that is, if we be not stark infidels, or utterly void of conscience.

This is hypocrisy turned the wrong side outward, disguising a man in a fouler shape, and uglier garb, than that which is natural and true.

And if we compare the two hypocrisies (that of pretending conscience which we want, and this of denying conscience which we have; that of seeming better than we are, this of seeming worse than we may be), this in nature may well seem more vile, in tendency more dangerous, in effect more mischievous than the other.

There is in both the same falsehood, the same prevarication, the like contempt and abuse of God; but the hypocrite of whom we speak doeth worse things, more directly wrongful to God, more prejudicial to goodness, more harmful to the world.

The specious hypocrite, counterfeiting goodness, and *having a form of godliness, without the power* and reality *of it*, doth yield to God some part (the exterior part) of his due honour and respect; but the sneaking hypocrite, disowning goodness, doth apparently desert, slight, and affront God: the one serveth God with his face and his voice, though *his heart be far from him;* the other doth not so much as sacrifice a carcass of obedience to him: that may bring some credit and advantage to goodness, strengthen its interest by his vote and countenance; this, by not avowing it, doth assuredly weaken its reputation and cause: that hypocrisy, as such, is a private and single evil, whereby a man doth indeed prejudice himself, but doth not injure his neighbour, yea, may edify him by the appearing (which in this respect is the same with the real) goodness of his example; but this hypocrisy is a general mischief, a scandalous evil, a contagious pestilence, whereby a man not only harmeth himself, but wrongeth many others, seducing them into dissoluteness, infecting the world with base indifference to good, and easiness to comply with sin.

It is indeed a sad thing that God and goodness should be deserted upon this account; that most men should be so uncharitable, so unjust, so imprudent, as to suspect all good men of hypocrisy; as if it were incredible that any man should heartily love or fear God (when it is rather strange that any man should do otherwise;) that any man in good earnest, or otherwise in pretence and for sinister respects, should embrace virtue (when it is marvellous that a reasonable man should decline it;) that so many, of themselves inclinable to goodness, should be so weak as to be deterred from it by so vain an apprehension; and that the name of hypocrisy should drive away piety; that it should become desirable that hypocrites might abound in the world, lest religion both in truth and show should be discarded.

In fine, we may otherwise suppress this odious imputation than by deserting goodness; we may demonstrate ourselves serious and sincere by an inflexible adherence to it in the continual tenor of our practice; and especially in some instances of duty, which are hardly consistent with hypocrisy: for no man can hold long in a strained posture; no man will take much pains, or encounter great difficulties, or sustain grievous hardships and afflictions, cross his appetites, forego gains and honours, for that which he doth not heartily like and love: he may counterfeit in ceremonies and formalities, but he will hardly feign humility, meekness, patience, contentedness, temperance, at least uniformly and constantly. Even the patient enduring this censure will confute it, and wipe off the aspersion of hypocrisy.[1]

SERMON LXVII.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF ALL MEN.

2 Cor. viii. 21.—*Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

6. Another great impediment of good conversation before men is a desire of seeming courteous and civil. Men usually conform to sinful practices, because they would not be held clowns, rude and distasteful in conversation; they would not give offence to their company, by

[1] Matt. xxiii. 23.

clashing with their humour; by preferring their own judgment, and seeming to be in their own conceit wiser and better than those with whom they converse; by provoking them to think they are held fools, or worse, by such non-compliance.

This is an ordinary snare to easy and ingenuous natures; but the ground of it is very unreasonable: for although in matters of indifference, where duty and sin do not fall into consideration, to be limber and ductile as can be (which is the temper of the best metal), to have no humour of our own, or to resign up all our humour to the will of our company, to condescend unto, and comport with, any thing; to raise no faction or debate, but presently to yield to the swaying vote; to *become all things to all men* in a ready complaisance, be wisdom and good manners, doth argue good nature, good understanding, good breeding; is a rightly gentle and obliging quality:

Yet where duty is concerned, where sinning or not sinning is the case, there courtesy hath no room; there it is vain to pretend any engagement to complaisance.

For surely it is better to be held uncivil, than to be ungodly; it is far better manners to offend any number of men, than to be rude with God, to clash with his pleasure, to offer indignity and injury to him: there can be no competition in the case; no shadow of reason, why we should displease God to please men.

As it were more civil to offend ten thousand boors (peasants) than to affront our king; so to offend ten thousand kings than to affront our God, were in policy more advisable, and in equity more justifiable: so the royal Psalmist did judge; for, *Princes* (said he) *did sit and speak against me, but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes:*[a] so Moses, so Samuel, so Elias, so Jeremy, so Daniel, so the three noble children, so the holy apostles did conceive;[b] who being persons otherwise very courteous and gentle, yet had not that consideration of mighty princes, as not rather to approve their consciences to God, than to comply with their pleasure; how much less should we, upon pretence of courtesy toward inferior persons, in ordinary conversation transgress our duty?

[a] Psal. cxix. 23. [b] Matt. x. 18.

Our own interest in such cases is too considerable to be sacrificed to the conceit or pleasure of any men: our salvation is no matter wherein formality of respect should intervene, or have any weight; to gain or forfeit our eternal happiness is no business of compliment or ceremony: it were a silly courtesy for a man to wait on his company to hell, a wild point of gallantry to be damned in complaisance.

Who would take himself to be obliged in good manners to hold on the round in a cup of poison; to leap down after those, who, from blind inadvertency, or wilful perverseness, tumble into a gulf; to gash or stab himself in conformity to some desperate folk? Much less can a man be engaged out of any such regard (in compliance with the mistake, weakness, or pravity of others) to incur guilt, to provoke divine wrath, to expose his soul to utter ruin, to undergo a damage, for which all the world cannot make any reparation or amends.

Is it not far better to disgust than to gratify those who have so little consideration of our welfare; who indeed are very discourteous and heinously rude in offering to tempt us unto sin, to desire a compliance therein with them; to expect from us, that we should adventure so much for their vain satisfaction?

Indeed to gratify such persons were great and noble courtesy; but really to do it, we should not go this way; for this is a spurious courtesy, rather conspiracy and treachery, than courtesy.

It is in truth, at the bottom, great discourtesy (involving much unkindness, real abuse, unmerciful inhumanity and cruelty) to second, to countenance, to support or encourage any man in doing that which manifestly tendeth unto his great prejudice, to his utter bane.

It is the truest civility (implying real humanity, genuine charity, faithful kindness, and tender pity) to stand off in such cases, and, by refusing (in a modest, gentle, discreet manner refusing) to concur in sin with our friends and companions, to check them, to warn them, to endeavour their amendment and retreat from pernicious courses; to exercise that *compassion* toward them, which St. Jude calleth *pulling them out of the fire.*[c]

[c] Jude 22, 23.

In such cases to repel them, yea to reprove them, is the greatest favour we can show them; it is not only safe for ourselves, but kind to them, to observe St. Paul's precept, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them;*[d] for which deportment, whenever they come to themselves, and soberly reflect on things, they will thank and bless us; and it will happen as the Wise man saith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue.*[e]

In fine, if we thoroughly scan the business, we shall find that commonly it is not abundance of courtesy, but a defect of charity, or of conscience, or of courage, which disposeth us to reservedness, or to concurrence upon such occasions, in regard to unallowable practices.

7. Another snare which catcheth and holdeth us in open practice of sin, or neglect of duty, is deference to the opinion, authority, custom, or example of others; to the common opinion, to the authority of great and leading persons, to the fashion of the world, and prevalent humour of the age.

A man (not consulting or not confiding in his own reason) is apt to credit the vogue, to defer a kind of veneration to the general sentiments of men (especially of men qualified), apprehending that allowable or tolerable which men commonly by their practice seem to approve. He is prone to suspect his own judgment of mistake, when it doth thwart the opinion of so many; and hardly can have the heart to oppose his single apprehension against so common notions.

The commonness of sin and multitude of offenders doth in a manner authorize and warrant it, doth at least seem to excuse and extenuate it.*

A man easily conceiteth himself safe enough, while he is in the herd, while he walketh in the road, when he hath the broad coverlet of general usage to shroud him from blame;[f] he doth at least fancy consolation in undergoing a doom with so many.

But upon many accounts this is a very fallacious and dangerous ground of practice.

For multitudes are no good authors of opinion, or guides of practice.[g]*

Wise men have ever been apt to suspect that to be bad, which is most commonly admired and affected.

Nothing is more vulgarly noted, than the injudiciousness, the blindness, the levity, temerity, and giddiness of the vulgar; temper, inclination, appetite, interest, and the like perverting biases, have most sway on them; any specious appearance, any slight motive, any light rumour doth serve to persuade them any thing, to drive them any whither.

All ages have deplored the paucity of wise and good men; the genuine disciples of our Lord, and *sons of wisdom*, have ever been *pusillus grex, a small flock;* our Lord hath told us, that *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*[h]

Wherefore popular use is no good argument of truth or right; nor can yield any warrant or any colour for infringing God's law: no *plebiscitum* can be of force against it.

God never did allow the people to exempt themselves or us from their loyalty, or obedience to his laws; they are universally obligatory; he hath *commanded all men to repent;* he hath threatened that otherwise *all shall perish;* and that *tribulation and anguish* shall be *upon every soul of man that doeth evil.*[i]

He by express prohibitions hath obviated all such pretences and pleas: *Thou shalt not* (saith he) *follow a multitude to do evil;* and, *Say ye not a confederacy—neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid* (fear not to dissent and discost *from the way of this people.*) And, *If sinners entice thee* (how many soever they be, though it be *a sinful nation, a people laden mith iniquity, a seed of evil doers*), *consent thou not.*[j]

* —— illos Defendit numerus ——*Juv. Sat.* ii. 45.

[d] Eph. v. 11, 7. [e] Prov. xxviii. 23.

[f] Ecclus. xvi. 17.

* Argumentum pessimi turba.—*Sen. de Vit.* b. 2.

[g] Ant. ix. 18; xi. 3. 4.

[h] Matt. vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24; Rom. ix. 27; Isa. x. 22.

[i] Acts xvii. 30; Luke xiii. 3; Rom. ix. 12; ii. 9.

[j] Exod. xxiii. 2; Rom. xii. 2, Be not conformed to this world; Isa. viii. 11; 1 John ii. 15, Love not the world; Isa. viii. 10; Prov. i. 10; Isa. i. 4.

Indeed, if we consider it, it is so far from excusing sin, that it is an aggravation thereof, that we therein conspire with others, and the more the worse: to oppose God singly, is not quite so criminal as to join with a rout in hostility and rebellion against him; for hereby God's authority is more shaken, and his honour more rudely violated; hereby we do not only sin ourselves, but contribute to the sin of others, encourage them to it, and uphold them in it by our patronage.

Hereby we become accessary to the degeneracy and general apostasy of the age.

Hereby we do join our forces to pull down God's judgments on our country, and by promoting general corruption induce general vengeance.

The multitude of sinners is so far from sheltering any one from wrath, that it surely draweth it upon all; forcing the Almighty, not only for the assertion of his own authority, and vindication of his honour, but for the good of the people, and *purgation* of the world, to pour forth remarkable vengeance.[k]

For example: In the time of Noah did God *spare the old world*, when *all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth*, did that stave off God's wrath, or stop the deluge?[l] No; it did grievously provoke him, it did in a manner necessitate him *to destroy man from the face of the earth; bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.*[m]

Did the number of sinners in Sodom prevent vengeance on them? was it not that which did *condemn them to an overthrow*[n] so dismal, pulling down fire and brimstone on them?

What was the reason of that woful captivity into which Israel was carried? was it not because they *were all grievous revolters;*[o] and had so generally conspired in wickedness, that the prophet could say, *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it?*[p] Was it not this which did wring from God that sentence, *Shall I not visit for these things? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*[q]

When the case is such in any community, as it was in Israel, when God said, *From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it,*[r] then judgment is necessary, and it must assuredly follow, *Your country is desolate*[s]—then God, his patience being tired, and his goodness unsupportably abused, will cry out, *Ah, I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.*[t]

God, as Governor of the world, in discharge of his office, for clearing his honour, for assuring his majesty, out of regard to public good, for the safety and welfare of his subjects, is concerned to chastise notorious, scandalous, and infectious sin: he may reserve private sins for the final doom, when *the hidden things of darkness shall be brought to light, and the counsels of hearts manifested,*[u] and all things shall receive just reward and recompense; but it is expedient to punish public sins publicly: they who *declare their sin as Sodom,*[v] with outrageous impudence, are like to find a punishment like that in a common vengeance.

We should therefore in such a case be the more careful of our conversation, more shy of sinful compliance with others, for preventing public calamity; for that our single piety and innocence (or the goodness of a few) may save our country, together with ourselves, from wrath and ruin; seeing it is the gracious method of God in regard to a few righteous men to spare the rest, to release a nation from deserved punishment; for if in Sodom had been found ten righteous persons, it had escaped that horrible destruction;[w] and Israel in Hezekiah's time (although in a very great and general corruption of that age) by a few good men did avoid the like doom; according to that of the prophet, *Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom.*[x]

The righteousness of one Noah did

[k] Isa. i. 25, I will purge away the dross.
[l] Gen. vi. 12; 2 Pet. ii. 5.
[m] Gen. vi. 7; 2 Pet. ii. 5.
[n] 2 Pet. ii. 6.
[o] Jer. vi. 28.
[p] Jer. v. 1.
[q] Jer. v. 29.
[r] Isa. i. 6.
[s] Isa. i. 7.
[t] Isa. i. 24.
[u] 1 Cor. iv. 15.
[v] Isa. iii. 9.
[w] Gen. xviii. 32.
[x] Isa. i. 9; Lam. iii. 22.

save the race of mankind from being extinct.

The zeal of one Phinehas did stop that plague which had devoured Israel: *Phinehas* (said God himself) *the son of Eleazar, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.*[y]

If there had been such another public patron of piety, at the time when Israel was so severely punished by deliverance into captivity, it would have obstructed that lamentable event: God himself so testified; for, *I sought* (said he) *for a man among them, that would make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them:* —and *Run ye to and fro* (said he again), *seek if ye can find a man—in Jerusalem,—and I will pardon it.*[z]

Wherefore, beside regard to our own welfare, a consideration of public good, charity toward the world, a compassion of our country, should withhold us from conspiring in common transgressions, or omissions of duty.

If we sin with all, we must suffer with all; nor will the having so much company in suffering yield any true comfort to us: *Socios habuisse doloris* (to have companions in sorrow) is in itself a pitiful solace, and an unworthy one, savouring of inhuman malignity;[a] for our fellows will bear no share with us, or take off any thing from the burden of our pains, which will be equally to them and us extreme.

Can it be any considerable satisfaction, that we are sick of an epidemical disease, that sweepeth away multitudes about us and with us?

Is it better for one part, that the whole body is overspread with a noisome leprosy? that its fellow-members are tortured with grievous anguish?

Can the sorest pains of our brethren cure the achings of our heart, assuage the pangs of our conscience, or slack the consuming flames beneath?

What advantage can we enjoy from going down to hell in a troop? what ease shall we find there from being encompassed with the doleful groans, the piercing shrieks, and dismal howlings of fellow-sufferers in that infernal dungeon?

Alas! will it not rather augment our pains to hear the sore complaints, the fierce accusations, the desperate curses of those, whom our compliance hath engaged, or encouraged, or confirmed and hardened in that wicked practice, which did throw them into that disconsolate case?

8. Another principle (near of kin to the former) is a dislike of singularity and solitude; together with the consequences and imputations usually cleaving thereto.

One would not be a man by himself; to be gazed on, to be hooted at as a kind of prodigy, to be deemed an extravagant, odd, humourous, fantastic person, conceited of his own opinion, addicted to his own way, arrogating to himself a liberty of crossing and condemning or contemning the world; therefore he runneth along with the age, complying with its sinful customs and naughty fashions.*

But this is a vain principle; for really to be singular is no fault, to be held so is no disgrace; it is rather in many cases laudable and honourable; and if in any, most reasonably it is in this.

Doth not singularity or paucity increase the price and estimation of every valuable thing? What maketh a jewel but rarity? what but that maketh a diamond more precious than a pebble?

Do not men for singular eminency in any art, skill, faculty, endowment, gain credit and renown? What recommended to posterity the names of Apelles, Praxiteles, Phidias, but excelling in their art beyond the ordinary rate? what gave to Demosthenes and Cicero their esteem, but a singular knack of eloquence? to what did Alexander and Cæsar owe their fame, but to an extraordinary valour? whence got Socrates such a name, but from his singular wisdom? whence Fabricius, Aristides, Cato, but from their singular integrity?

Why then should it be a discourage-

[y] Num. xxv. 11; Psal. cvi. 30.
[z] Ezek. xxii. 30, 31; Jer. v. 1.
[a] God will not oversee us, Ecclus. xvi. 17.

* He is grievous unto us even to behold: for his life is not like other men's, his ways are of another fashion. Wisd. ii. 15, &c.

ment or reproach to be singular or extraordinary in the noblest of all faculties, that of living well? in the most excellent of all perfections, that of virtue?

In truth, a man is hardly capable of a greater commendation than this, that he is singularly good; that he surpasseth the vulgar level, and mounteth near heaven in the divinest qualities; that no bad exampie or fashion hath been able to seduce or corrupt him: this should render him to be most highly esteemed, and most dearly cherished, as a choice ornament of the world, as a most useful instrument of good to mankind.

It were desirable that virtue were more common in the world; but surely its being more rare doth render it more admirable, more illustrious, more glorious.

Heroical virtue is therefore such, because so few do attain or can reach it;

—— pauci quos æquus amavit
Jupiter;

A few, who by special assistance of God's grace, and by extraordinary resolution, do surmount the obstacles which are set against it.

It was well said of St. Bernard, *To be good among good men hath safety, but to be such among bad men hath also praise* (a man will be saved by that, but he should be commended for this;) *that hath as much facility as it hath security, this is of as much worth as difficulty.**

Indeed, if we consider the nature of things, or consult the history of times, we shall find that virtue must be, and ever hath been, liable to this imputation; it is commonly so hard and hazardous to be good in any notable degree, that few will take the pains, or undergo the hardships, requisite to attain or exercise it.

Hence the best men (who are such, not according to the blind conjecture of men, but in God's sure esteem) are an elect, and peculiar sort of people,[b] a few choice persons culled out of a great lump of those, who either reject religion, or embrace it only in verbal profession or formal show.

Hence it hath been the observation, and complaint of all times.

Rari quippe boni.—*Juv. Sat.* xiii. 28.

Hence the most renowned men for goodness, and who by God's special care have been recommended to us as patterns thereof, have been very singular in it; and their singularity did much enhance the price of their goodness.

It is said of Enoch, that *he walked with God;*[c] but it seemeth with small or no company beside; otherwise it would not have been so particularly recorded of him.

Noah was content to be a man by himself, *a preacher of righteousness* against the vogue, and a practiser thereof against the stream of his whole age; for *thee* (said God of him, that is, thee alone) *have I seen righteous before me in this generation.*[d] He was no less singular in his goodness, than in his salvation.

Abraham had no common qualities, which moved God to pick him out, and separate him from the rest of mankind (to single him *from his kindred and country,*[e]) to confer special graces and blessings on him.

Lot had *his righteous soul vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked,*[f] which did inclose him, yet so that he did retain a sound and clear integrity among them.

Job had this testimony from God, examining Satan concerning him; *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*[g]

What was the resolution of Joshua? did he value being sole or singular in his practice? No; for, propounding to his people whether they would choose God or not, he told them, that however it were, although all of them should forsake God, he was resolved to stick fast to him, not regarding their practice; *But* (said he) *as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord:*[h] that indeed was nobly resolved; it was a resolution worthy of such an hero, to stand alone in so good and wise a choice against his whole nation. It was a resolution suitable to that his behavour, which he expressed in these

* Inter bonos, bonus esse salutem habet, inter malos vero et laudem; illud tantæ facilitatis est, quantæ et securitatis; hoc tantæ virtutis, quantæ et difficultatis.—*Bern. Ep.* 25.

[b] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

[c] Gen. v. 22.

[d] Gen. vii. 1.

[e] Gen. xii. 1.

[f] 2 Pet. ii. 7.

[g] Job i. 8.

[h] Josh. xxiv. 15.

words: *My brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God;*[i] in regard to which his comrade Caleb, being of the same spirit with him, is called a man of *another spirit;*[j] different from, and above the mean spirit of his fellows.

What was David? was he not a man by himself? was he not like one, of whom the poet saith,

> Egregium sanctumque virum si cerno, bimembri
> Hoc monstrum puero, vel fœtæ comparo mulæ?
> *Juv. Sat.* xiii.

So he telleth us: *I* (saith he) *am become as it were a monster* unto many, but my sure trust is in thee.*[k]

Did Elias, to shun the imputation of singularity or in regard to common practice, swerve from his faithful adherence to God's service, although he did passionately resent, and bewail his case? No; for, *I have* (said he) *been very jealous for the Lord of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.*[l] What was the case of Jeremy? *I* (saith he) *was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day:*[m] yet did he maintain his integrity, and was *a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and a brazen wall† against the whole land; against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, and against the people of the land.*[n]

What was the condition of our Lord? was not he σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον, *a prodigy spoken against* by all; against whom *both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together;*[o] who *trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him;*[p] who in his life was regarded by few, and at his death (when he yielded his great attestation to truth and righteousness) was deserted by all?[q]

What was the apostles' condition? were they not singular men? were not they held *a sect everywhere spoken against,* and impugned with all violence of spirit and rage? were not they *made a spectacle to the world,* to be gazed at with scorn and reproach?[r] did not they (a few simple, poor, weak folk) in doctrine and practice cross and control the world, confuting, reproving, condemning the generality of men of error, of folly, of wickedness?

It can therefore be no just blame, or reasonable discouragement to appear singular in the practice of virtue.

Such a singularity is no good argument of fond conceitedness, of wilful humour, of arrogant pride. For,

Can it be fond conceitedness to follow the dictates of the best reason, to observe the advices of the wisest men in all times, to follow the direction and conduct of infinite wisdom; to embrace that, which in most cases natural light, common sense, and continual experience, do approve? is it not wildness to do otherwise, though all should do it?

Can it be wilful humour to hold fast our best interest, our truest comfort, our eternal salvation? is it not rather so, to comply with *a perverse generation* in running headlong to their own ruin?

Can it be pride or arrogance to acknowledge our Maker, to be loyal and dutiful to our heavenly Sovereign, to fear the Almighty God, to submit to his will, to *tremble at his word,* to *be afraid of his judgments,* to shun his fierce anger and severe vengeance?

Is it a bad ambition to seek that honour and immortal glory which God doth offer, to shun that everlasting shame and contempt which he doth menace?

Is it not rather monstrous presumption and enormous vanity to consort and conspire with rebels against God's law, with despisers of his grace?

In fine, when the most men are foolish and vain, when the world is depraved and dissolute, it is necessary that the best reason should be called humour, and the wisest men should be deemed extravagant; that the best things should be slighted, and the best persons represented with odious characters: but hence to re-

* A wonder,—N. Tr. Psal. lxxi. 7.
† Murus aheneus.
[i] Josh. xiv. 8. [j] Num. xiv. 24.
[k] Psal. cxix. 51; 1 Pet. iv. 4.
[l] 1 Kings xix. 10. [m] Lam. iii. 14.
[n] Jer. i. 18.
[o] Luke ii. 34; Heb. xii. 3; Acts iv. 27.
[p] Isa. lxiii. 3.
[q] John xii. 37; xvi. 32; Matt. xxvi. 31, 56.
[r] Acts xxviii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 9; Heb. x. 33 1 Cor. i. 26.

nounce wisdom and goodness is abominably absurd; as if we should therefore put out our light, because it is night about us, or in deep winter should put off our clothes among the wild Indians.

9. Of affinity to the foregoing principles is this most plausible apology for smothering our conscience, namely, a prudential apprehension, that we shall not come off well in openly avowing and abetting goodness, so as to do any good or service to it thereby; but shall thereby rather work prejudice and disservice to it.

The age (will such a wise man say) is incorrigibly degenerate; wickedness is not only bold and impudent, but even outrageously insolent; so that to appear strictly good is a kind of scandal, to pretend conscience for our rule of action is to be ridiculous, to patronise duty is to provoke scorn and obloquy,[t] to mention religion is to prostitute and profane it, to concern God in our doing is to expose his most sacred and venerable name to irrision and foul abuse.

Such is the posture of things, that of all the sects and factions which divide the world, that of epicurean scorners and mockers is become the most formidable; with disdainful pride insulting and vapouring over the professors of religion, persecuting all soberness of mind and staunchness of manners with a fierce rage and a kind of satanic zeal.

The state of the world being like to that when the holy Psalmist cried out, *Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? how long shall they utter and speak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?*[u]

In such a case, is it not seasonable to observe our Lord's advice, *not to give that which is holy unto dogs, nor to cast our pearls before swine?*[v] (not to expose good doctrine and holy practice to scurrilous and sensual people, who will snarl and bark at it, will scorn and trample on it, will bite and tear you for it?)

Is it not, then, wisdom rather fairly to retreat, withdrawing our virtue into a safe retirement, than by openly contesting for it against overmatching forces, to hazard its being baffled and abused, its being trampled on and triumphed over, by scornful pride and malice?

In such a world, to oppose impiety, what is it but attempting to stop a torrent, to allay a storm, to gape against an oven, to blow against the wind, to kick against the pricks?

But if this case be rightly weighed, it rather strongly may engage us to an open profession and practice of the strictest virtue, than excuse us from it.

St. Paul doth enjoin us *to walk accurately, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time*, for this reason, *because the days are evil;* and *that we should be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, shining among them as lights in the world, and holding forth* the word of life.*[w]

And great reason for it; for the worse the world is, the more need there is of good patterns to instruct and guide it. to admonish and excite it to goodness.

If the days are evil, it is high time that we should apply our best endeavours to the mending of them.

If virtue be so near lost, or so quite gone from among us, it is needful that we should presently seek to recover or to retrieve it.†

If goodness be so hardly pressed by opposition, then hath every good man the more reason to appear strenuously in its defence, the more are we engaged to hasten with all our might to its relief and succour from irrecoverable oppression.

Every one should labour to raise a bank against that inundation which threateneth to overflow and overwhelm all.

Shall we endure to see the adversary of our welfare to carry all before him without any opposition or obstruction? Shall we suffer iniquity to enjoy a quiet reign, to root and settle itself in its usurpation, to raise itself a title of long occupancy, and prescription against goodness?

Is it not, then, more generous to avow our friendship to virtue, and to abet it in our patronage, when it is under the

[t] Job xii. 4.
[u] Psal. xciv. 3, 4; lii. 1; x. 3.
[v] Matt. vii. 6.

* (or holding fast, Ἐπέχοντες.)
† Specta juvenis—in ea tempora natus es, quibus formare animum expediat constantibus exemplis.—*Tac. Ann.* 16.
[w] Eph. v. 15; Phil. ii. 15.

hatches, and crieth for our aid? is it not vile treachery in such a case to desert it?

Is it not gallant, then, *to resist sin*, and check wickedness, when it is so high and rampant?

Who will not be virtuous (or endeavour at least to appear such) when virtue is in fashion and request; when it flourisheth in reputation, when all the world doth countenance and abet it? who will not shun or disown wickedness, when it is commonly odious and despicable? who will *not help the Lord against* weak adversaries?[y]

But to embrace virtue upon greatest disadvantages, to disclaim vice in its triumphant prosperity, this is indeed brave and masculine.

He is a worthy man indeed who can keep the field among so many stout enemies, who can stand upright *in a crooked generation;* who can despise the scorn, defy the rage, bear up against the impudence and malignity of vain, base, wretched men, combining to supplant and extirpate goodness.

Nor have we reason, in proceeding thus, to despair of good success; we need not fear thereby to expose the credit, or endanger the interest of goodness. For,

How can we fail of prospering in the maintenance of God's cause and special concern? Although men may commonly desert him, yet doth he not utterly forsake them, or give over the government of the world; he may let the reins lie a little loose, but he doth not put them out of his hands; his power cannot be abated, his providence can never sleep; though he is so patient in suffering wicked men to provoke him, yet he will not be *slack* in assisting good men, who take his part, and undertake to maintain his honour; assuredly he will help them who *help him against the mighty.*

In this service *one will chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight;* one David will knock down never so many Philistines reproaching God's name; one Phinehas will repress the petulancy of a whole nation; one Jeremy shall be *a brazen wall against a whole land:* God will make it good to such an one, *They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.*[z]

One sober man in defence of virtue is able to discomfit all the hectors, the huffing blades, and boisterous ruffians in the world, attacking them with sound discretion and steady resolution: for all their bravery and confidence, they are easily mated; and being like their sire, if you *resist them, they will flee from you:*[a] a prudent, seasonable, smart check, will quash their spurious courage and giddy audacity. Their contempt of goodness is but feigned; they cannot really for their hearts despise it; there is stamped on their souls and consciences such a respect, such an awe thereof, which they cannot quite rase out: wherefore if you briskly represent it to them, and challenge their reverence to it, they cannot but succumb, their own mind and conscience joining to back your reproof; so that if you cannot reclaim them, you shall however press them; if you cannot correct their vice, you shall yet confound their impudence: *For so* (saith St. Peter) *it is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men;* and, *Having a good conscience, that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your conversation in Christ.*[b]

It is only a sneaking, or a timorous pretence to virtue, which they contemn; but they will admire those who stiffly adhere to it, and stoutly maintain it.

We shall therefore expose virtue, not by frankly avowing it, but by faintly slinking from it, when occasion requireth an open acknowledgment and exemplary practice of it.

If the world is so very bad, it will not be worse for our attempt to better it; it will be so much at least better, that one therein hath that worthy purpose.

It was bad, when Noah preached righteousness to it.

It was bad, when Elias was so zealous for the Lord of hosts.

It was bad, when Jeremy was derided for declaring God's will, and exhorting to repentance.

[y] Judges v. 23.

[z] Deut. xxxii. 30; Josh. xxiii. 10; Num. xxv. 3; Jer. xv. 20; i. 19; xx. 11.

[a] James iv. 7.

[b] Jer. xx. 11; 1 Pet. ii. 15; iii. 16; Tit. ii. 8.

They were very bad times, when all the prophets did strive so earnestly to reclaim men from their wickedness; being reproached and persecuted for doing so, but not deterred from doing it: the resentment they had of the badness of times, did not make them abandon the means of its recovery from it.

The whole world did lie in wickedness[c] when the apostles did undertake the reformation of it.

In fine, if men generally upon such accounts of despairing prudence neglect to own goodness, what must the consequence be?[d] what, but that piety shall be cashiered, that virtue shall be discarded, that conscience shall be quite exploded and exterminated from the world? that consequently an horrible deluge of various mischiefs, a general prevalence of lewdness and luxury, of fraud and violence, of faction and tumult, a violation of all faith and friendship, a dissolution of all order and peace, will ensue?

And what must grow upon this state of things? what but another flood of judgments, and woful vengeance? When God's patience hath been tried to the utmost, and his goodness tired with bearing such a load of abominations, he will be forced to cry out, *Shall I not visit for these things? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*[e]

10. Another principle of dispensing with conscience in public duties and conversation before men, is a kind of perverse wisdom, or subtle craft, affecting the name of discretion.*

Men see there are divers inconveniences attending the profession of respect to God and conscience in all their doings; that the world may dislike and disesteem them, that divers persons will hate, malign, reproach, and persecute them for it; that they may chance to be crossed in their designs, and lose profits or preferments thereby; therefore they deem it advisable to decline it in open view, making up the defect by adoring and serving God in private.

Thus they think to salve all, by maintaining a neutrality, and compounding the business; yielding an open conformity to the world, and reserving a secret regard to God; sinning publicly, and privately repenting; retaining their credit, quiet, ease, pleasure, with their conscience and peace of mind; affecting some piety, but avoiding the scandal of it.[f]

They would hold fair with both sides; so that neither the world should persecute them for crossing its humour, nor God punish them for transgressing his will.

They drive a subtle trade, hoping to gain on all hands, both the benefits of the other, and the advantages of this world; to save their soul, and serve their worldly interests together:

This they would believe a point of special wisdom prescribed by Solomon: *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself overwise; for why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before the time?*[g]

But this rooking trick, to hedge thus and save stakes, to play fast and loose, to dodge and shuffle with God, God doth not like, nor will suffer himself to be gulled with it.

He will not be satisfied with such a mongrel, partial, and *halting service.*[h]

He will not allow us to withhold that half of his service (the external, visible part thereof) which is most honourable to him, and most beneficial to our neighbour.

He cannot endure a double heart, or a double face; one looking upward to heaven, another downward to the earth.[i]

He exacteth from us an integrity of heart and perfection of obedience; that we should love him with our whole heart, that we should be *perfect with him*, that we should walk uprightly, not *deflecting to the right hand or left* from our duty.

He will not endure that we should hold amity or correspondence with his ene-

* Stulta caliditas, perverse imitata prudentiam.—*Cic. de Off.* iii. p. 143.

[c] 1 John v. 19.

[d] None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth, Isa. lix. 4.

[e] Jer. v. 29; Isa. i. 24; lix. 17.

[f] Gal. v. 11.

[g] Eccles. vii. 16, 17. [h] 1 Kings xviii. 21.

[i] Psal. xii. 2; James i. 8; iv. 8; 2 Chron. xii. 33; 1 Tim. iii. 8; Δίγλωσς. Psal. xxxvii. 37, Their heart was not whole with him. (O. Tr.); Deut. xviii. 13; Job i. 8; Psal. xliv. 18; cxix. 51; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 2; Job xxiii. 11; Matt. vi. 24; Luke xvi. 13, Δυσὶ κυρίοις.

mies; particularly with the world, the friendship whereof he hath declared inconsistent with his favour; and that it is a spiritual adultery to impart any of our affections to it; according to that of St. James: *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? so that whosoever will be a friend of the world becometh the enemy of God.*[j]

We may shift as well as we can in the world, provided that we hold innocence, and do not conspire with it against God, by violation of our duty to him.* *Be wise as serpents, innocent as doves*, Matt. x. 16. (*as lambs*, Luke x. 3.)

They reproach good men as superstitious; who are afraid of invisible powers; who let go things in hand (present interests and pleasures) for a reversion and hope.

As if God's word were not sufficient security; as if we may not as well rely upon things conspicuous to reason, as those which are obvious to sense.

If Christianity be plainly false, they say well; but if it be true, very absurdly; yea if probable, very imprudently; yea if possible, not wisely.[k]

They charge conscientious men with timorousness, faintheartedness.

It is timorousness or blameable fear to dread things without reason, things nowise formidable, which cannot hurt us; such a timorous man is he, that out of fear of men (of displeasing them, of suffering by them, of their reproach), &c. transgresseth his duty.

But to fear God is wisdom, soberness, duty, virtue; it is handsome and honourable, becoming our nature, our condition; the passion of fear was chiefly put in us for this purpose, as its best use.

Is it courage, and not rather madness, to provoke, to resist, to challenge, to cope with the Almighty? is it courage to throw one's self down a precipice, to leap into the infernal lake? is it gallantry to dare to transgress all reason and sobriety? is it brave to be wild and senseless, &c.?

It is true courage to resist and repel sin assaulting a man with whatever advantages; to dare to do well, although vain men deride, and spiteful men hate us for it.

It is a kind of martyrdom to be ill used by the world for adhering to his duty; and he hath a share in that, *Blessed are they, who suffer for righteouness.*

In fine, it is a vain prudence to be thus politic with God; whereby we shall lose the whole, or that part which is invaluable, out of presumption to save a small inconsiderable part.*

If this be prudence, *then* (as St. Paul saith) *is the offence of the cross ceased.*[l]

Then our Lord prescribed a foolish condition.

Then were the apostles very imprudent, who deserted all, and suffered so much for their conscience; being content to secure their spiritual interest, and to obtain the eternal rewards of piety; *choosing the better part, which could not be taken from them.*[m]

What the true wisdom is in such cases St. James hath told us: *Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.*[n]

SERMON LXVIII.

OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

PSALM cxlv. 9.—*The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.*

THE goodness of God is a frequented theme: to many perhaps it may seem vulgar and trite; so that discourse thereon, like a story often told, may be nauseous to their ears: but in truth neither can we speak too much upon this most excellent subject, nor ought we ever to be weary in hearing about it; for it is a sign that the palate of our mind is distempered, if we do not with delight and affection relish any mention of divine goodness. Yea, the observation of men's common practice would induce us to

† Rom. xvi. 19,—Σοφοὺς εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν, ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν.

j James iv. 3; 1 John ii. 15; (John xv. 19; xvii. 14;) Psal. xxxviii. 38, O. Tr.; Phil. ii. 5.

k Ἄτοκο. 2 Thess. iii. 2.

* Matt. x. 39,—Ὁ εὑρὼν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, ἀπολέσει αὐτήν.

l Gal. v. 11; Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24; Phil. iii. 8.

m Luke x. 42.

n James iii. 13.

think, that either this point is not so well known, or but little believed, or at least not well considered and applied. For how could we be so void of love to God, of gratitude toward him, of faith and hope in him, were we thoroughly persuaded, did we seriously consider, that he is so exceedingly good towards us? How can we be so insensible of the benefits we enjoy, so distrustful of finding succours and supplies in our need, so dissatisfied and discontented with what befalls us, if we conceive and weigh, that all things do proceed from, are guided and governed by immense goodness? How also, if men have such an opinion of God impressed on their minds, comes it to pass, that they are so little careful to resemble and imitate him in kindness, bounty, and mercy to one another? How is it, in fine, that the most powerful argument to all manner of good practice, and the mightiest aggravation of sin, if well known and pondered, hath so little force and efficacy upon us? From experience therefore this argument may seem scarce sufficiently inculcated. We may add, that discourse upon this attribute* (which above all other attributes doth render God peculiarly admirable and amiable), hath this special advantage beyond other discourses, that it doth, if our hearts conspire therewith, approach most nearly to the formal exercise of the most high and heavenly parts of devotion, praise, and thanksgiving; that it more immediately conduces to the breeding, the nourishing, the augmenting in us the best and noblest of pious affections, love and reverence to God; trust and hope in him; willing resolutions to please and serve him; whence it is consequent, that we cannot too much employ our thoughts, our words, or our attention upon this point. Besides so much reason, we have also good example to countenance us in so doing: we have the precedent of the holy Psalmist resolving to make it his constant and continual employment: *I will sing* (saith he) *of the mercies of the Lord; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.* And, *Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name for ever and ever*[a] (that blessing and praising God, the context shows to have consisted especially in the declaration of God's great goodness:) and, *It is a good thing* (saith he again) *to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O thou Most High: to show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.*[b] Such were his intentions, and such his judgment about this practice; and we find him in effect true and answerable to them; every song of his, every meditation, every exercise of devotion chiefly harping upon this string; and he earnestly wishes that others would consent and consort with him therein; he earnestly exhorts and incites them thereto: *O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Praise the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good, his mercy endureth for ever.*[c] That one example might sufficiently authorize this practice; but we have innumerable others, and those the highest that can be, to encourage and engage us thereto; even the whole choir of heaven, whose perpetual business and happy entertainment it is to contemplate with their minds, to celebrate with their voices, the immense goodness of God: *They have* (as it is in the Revelation) *no rest day nor night, from performing this office.*[d] Such is the subject of our discourse; the which our text most plainly and fully expresses; asserting not only the goodness of God, but the universal and boundless extent thereof: *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or *his bowels of affection and pity*) are over *all his works.* And that God indeed is such, we shall first endeavour to declare, then shall briefly apply the consideration thereof to practice.

That God, the Lord and Maker of all things, is of himself, in regard to all his creatures, especially to us men, superlatively good, that is, disposed never without just or necessary cause to harm us, and inclinable to do us all possible and befitting good, the universal frame of nature and the constant course of Provi-

* ——Θεὸς, οὐ πολλῶν ἄντων, ἐφ' οἷς θαυμάζεται, οὐδὲν οὕτως ὡς τὸ πάντας εὐεργέτειν ἰδιωτατόν.—Naz. Orat. 26.

[a] Psal. lxxxix. 1; cxlv. 2.
[b] Psal. xcii. 1, 2.
[c] Psal. cvii. 8; cvi. 1.
[d] Rev. iv. 8.

dence do afford us sufficient reason to conceive, and most frequent, most express testimonies of holy scripture do more fully demonstrate. There is no argument from natural effects discernible by us, which proveth God's existence (and innumerable such there are, every sort of things well studied may afford some), the which doth not together persuade God to be very kind and benign; careful to impart to us all befitting good, suitable to our natural capacity and condition; and unwilling that any considerable harm, any extreme want or pain, should befall us. (I interpose such limitations, for that an absolute, or universal and perpetual exemption from all kinds or all degrees of inconvenience, an accumulation of all sorts of appearing good upon us, doth not become or suit our natural state of being, or our rank in perfection among creatures; neither, all things being duly stated and computed, will it turn to best account for us.) The best (no less convincing than obvious) arguments, asserting the existence of a Deity, are deduced from the manifold and manifest footsteps of admirable wisdom, skill, and design apparent in the general order, and in the particular frame of creatures; the beautiful harmony of the whole, and the artificial contrivance of each part of the world; the which it is hardly possible that any unprejudiced and undistempered mind should conceive to proceed from blind chance, or as blind necessity. But with this wisdom are always complicated no less evident marks of goodness. We cannot in all that vast bulk of the creation, and numberless variety of things, discover any piece of mere pomp, or dry curiosity; every thing seems to have some beneficial tendency; according to which it confers somewhat to the need, convenience, or comfort of those principal creatures, which are endued with sense and capacity to enjoy them. Most of them have a palpable relation to the benefit (to the subsistence or delight) of living creatures; and especially in an ultimate relation to the benefit of man; and the rest, although their immediate use be not to our dim sight so discernible, may therefore be reasonably presumed in their natural designation to regard the same end. Wherefore, as upon consideration of that ample provision, which is made in nature for the necessary sustenance, defence, and relief, for the convenience, delight, and satisfaction of every creature, any man, who is not careless or stupid, may be induced to cry out with the Psalmist, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all:*[e] so may he with no less reason and ground after him pronounce and acknowledge, *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord: The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy: Thy mercy is great unto the heavens: thy mercy is great above the heavens.*[f] It is indeed because divine goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of itself; because essential love is active and fruitful in beneficence; because highest excellency is void of all envy, selfishness, and tenacity, that the world was produced such as it was; those perfections being intrinsical to God's nature, disposed him to bestow so much of being, of beauty, of pleasure upon his creatures. *He openeth his hand, they are filled with good:*[g] it is from God's open hand, his unconfined bounty and liberality, that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them, which satisfies their needs, and satiates their desires. Every pleasant object we view, every sweet and savoury morsel we taste, every fragrancy we smell, every harmony we hear; the wholesome, the cheering, the useful, yea, the innocent and inoffensive qualities of every thing we do use and enjoy, are so many perspicuous arguments of divine goodness; we may not only by our reason collect it, but we even touch and feel it with all our senses.

The like conclusion may be inferred from the observation of divine Providence. Every signification or experiment, whence we may reasonably infer that divine power and wisdom do concur in upholding, managing, and directing the general state of things, or the particular affairs of men, being well examined and weighed, would afford reason apt to persuade, that the Governor of the world is graciously affected toward his creatures and subjects. The general preservation of things in their natural constitution and

[e] Psal. civ. 24.

[f] Psal. xxxiii. 5; cxix. 64; lvii. 10; cviii. 4; civ. 10, &c.; lxv. 11; ciii. 4.

[g] Psal. civ. 28.

order; the dispensing constant vicisitudes of season, so as may serve for the supply of our needs; the maintaining such a course of things in the world, that, notwithstanding the great irregularity of will, and violence of passion in so many persons; yet men do ordinarily shift so as to live tolerably upon earth in peace and safety, and enjoyment of competent accommodations for life; with the aids and consolations arising from mutual society; the supports, encouragements, and rewards of virtue many times in a strange manner administered; the restraints, disappointments, and seasonable chastisements of wickedness, especially when it grows exorbitant and outrageous, unexpectedly intervening, with the like passages of Providence, will, to him that shall *regard the works of the Lord, and the operation of his hands*,[h] sufficiently declare, as the other glorious attributes (wisdom, power, and justice), so especially the goodness of him who presides over the world; assuring that he is a friend to the welfare, and dislikes the misery of mankind. He that shall well observe and consider how among so many fierce and hard-hearted, so many crafty and spiteful, so many domineering and devouring spirits, the poor and weak, the simple and harmless sort of people do however subsist, and enjoy somewhat, cannot but suspect that an undiscernible hand, full of pity and bounty, doth often convey the necessary supports of life to them, doth often divert imminent mischiefs from them; cannot but acknowledge it credible what the holy scripture teacheth, that God is the friend, and patron, and protector of those needy and helpless people, *redeeming their soul from deceit and violence*, as the Psalmist speaks; that he is, as the prophet expresseth it, *a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.*[i] He that shall remark how frequently, in an unaccountable way, succour and relief do spring up to just and innocent persons; so that in a whole age, as the Psalmist observed, such persons do not appear destitute or forsaken;[j] how also iniquity is commonly stopped in its full career, and then easily receives a check, when its violence seemed uncontrollable; how likewise many times the world is rescued from confusions and distractions unextricable by any visible wit or force; with other like occurrences in human affairs; must admit it for a reasonable hypothesis (fit to render a cause of such appearances) that a transcendent goodness doth secretly interpose, furthering the production of such effects: he must upon such observation be ready to verify that of the Psalmist: *Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.*[k] St. Paul instructs us, that in past times (that is, in all generations from the beginning of things) *God did attest himself* to be the Governor of the world:[l] How? ἀγαθοποιῶν, by his beneficence; *giving to men showers from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness:* competent evidences, it seems, these were of his providence, and withal (supposing that) certain demonstrations of his goodness: although some have abused this kind of testimony, or argumentation, so valid in itself, unto a contrary purpose; alleging, that if God ruled the world, so much wickedness and impiety would not be tolerated therein; that ingrateful and evil men could not so thrive and flourish; that more speedy and more severe vengeance would be executed; that benefits would not be scattered among the crowd of men, with so promiscuous and undistinguishing a freeness. But such discourses, upon a just and true account, do only infer the great patience and clemency, the unconfined mercy and bounty of our Lord; that he is in disposition very different from pettish and impatient man, who, should he have the reins put into his hands, and in his administration of things should be so often neglected, crossed, abused, would soon overturn all things; and, being himself discomposed with passion, would precipitate the world into confusion and ruin.

Things would not have subsisted hitherto, and continued in their orderly

[h] Psal. xxviii. 5; Isa. v. 12.
[i] Psal. xiv. 6; tot. x. 14; lxxii. 12; Isa. xxv. 4.
[j] Psal. xxxvii. 25.
[k] Psal. lviii. ult.
[l] Acts xiv. 17.

course, but by the moderation of an immense goodness; by that

—— magni custos clementia mundi.—*Claudian.*

It is *By the Lord's mercies that we* (we, the whole body of sinful men, so guilty of heinous provocations and rebellions against our Maker) *are not consumed.*[m] And what again God in the prophet speaks concerning Israel, he might have applied to the whole nation of men:[n] *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? I will not execute the fierceness of my anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man.* The reason (for I am God, and not man), is observable; implying (upon parity of reason in the cases, concerning that one nation, and concerning the body of men) that it is an indulgence and forbearance above, if not contrary to, the temper of man, and even beyond human conceit, whereby the state of things here doth subsist, and is preserved from ruin.

Thus nature and thus providence do bear witness concerning the disposition of God. As for scripture, there is nothing either in way of positive assertion more frequently inculcated, or by more illustrious examples set forth, and made palpable, than this attribute of God. When God would impart a portraiture or description of himself to his dearest friend and favourite, Moses;[o] the first and chief lineaments thereof are several sorts, or several instances of goodness: he expresses himself *merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness* (*Merciful: El rachum*) a *God of pitying*, or strong in pity; that is, most apt to commiserate and to succour those who are in need or distress. *Gracious*, that is, ready both freely to forgive wrongs, and to dispense favours. *Longsuffering*, or *longus irarum*, that is, not soon moved, or apt easily to conceive displeasure; not hasty in execution of vengeance, or venting his anger in hurtful effects. *Abundant in goodness*, that is, not sparing as to quantity or quality, either in the multitude or magnitude of his favours, but in all respects exceedingly liberal; conferring willingly both very many and very great benefits. Such did God represent himself to Moses, when he desired a fuller knowledge and nearer acquaintance with him, than ordinary means afford.[p] The same character in substance we have often repeated, and sometimes with advantage of emphatical expression, well deserving our observation and regard; as when the prophet Joel saith, that God *is penitent, or sorry for evil inflicted;* and Micah, that *he delighteth in mercy;* and when Nehemiah calleth him *a God of pardons;* and when Isaiah represents him as *waiting* (or seeking occasions) *to be gracious:*[q] and all this in the Old Testament, where God seems to look upon man with a less serene and debonair aspect. Indeed, as that dispensation (suitably to the nature and condition of things under it) doth set out God's mercy and goodness, with especial relation to this present world, or temporal estate; so the New one more abundantly displays his more excellent care and love of our souls; his great tenderness of our spiritual and eternal welfare. It is all of it in its nature and design but as it were one entire declaration of the τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, (the beneficial disposition, the benignity, or bountifulness of God, as St. Paul telleth us;[r]) it is a rare project of divine philanthropy; an illustrious affidavit of God's wonderful propensity to bless and save mankind; manifested by the highest expressions and instances of love and goodness that were possible. (For his not sparing his own Son, *the express image of his substance*, the dearest object of his infinite love, the partaker of his eternal nature and glory, but delivering him up a sacrifice for our offences; his most earnest wooing our baseness and unworthiness to reconciliation with him, and admission or acceptance of his favour; his tendering upon so fair and easy terms an endless life, in perfect joy and bliss; his furnishing us with so plentiful means and powerful aids for attaining that happy state—how pregnant demonstrations are these, of unspeakable goodness toward us![s] whence) The ordinary titles in this dispensation attributed unto him, are,

[m] Lam. iii. 32.
[n] Hos. xi. 8.
[o] Exod. xxxiv. 6.
[p] Psal. lxxxvi. 5; ciii. 8, &c.
[q] Joel ii. 13; Micah vii. 18; Neb. ix. 17; Isa. xxx. 18.
[r] Rom. ii. 4.
[s] Rom. v. 21.

the God of love and peace, of hope, of patience; of all grace, of all consolation; the father of pities, rich in mercy, full of bowels; love and goodness itself.[t] Thus doth the scripture positively assert God's goodness; thus it directly represents and describes his gracious disposition toward us. And as for examples (which must serve as to illustrate and explain, so also to verify and assure matters of this nature), if we carefully attend to God's ordinary proceedings with men there recorded, we shall find this disposition very conspicuous in them.[u] Who can recount the number, or set out the value of those instances wherein God's goodness is expressed toward such as loved him? of his admirable condescension in drawing them to him; of the affectionate tenderness with which he constantly embraced them; of his merciful indulgence toward them, when provoked by their untowardly behaviour; of his kind acceptance, and munificent recompensing their endeavours to please him; of his deep compassionating their sufferings; of his vigilant carefulness over them, and over all their concernments? Methinks the highest expressions that language, assisted with all its helps of metaphor and resemblance, can afford, are very languid and faint in comparison of what they strain to represent, when the goodness of God toward them who love him comes to be expressed: *As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him:*[v] so David strives to utter it, but with similitudes far short of the truth. If any will come near to reach it, it is that in Moses and Zechariah, when they are compared to *the apple of God's eye*, that is, to the most dear and tender part, as it were, about him.[w]

We find them often styled, and ever treated, as friends and as children;[x] and that in a sense transcending the vulgar signification of those words; for, what friendship could endure, could pass over, could forget, could admit an entire reconciliation and re-establishment in affection after such heinous indignities, such infidelities, such undutifulness, as were those of Adam, of Noah, of David, of Peter? Who would have received into favour and familiarity a Manasses, a Magdalen, a Paul? Who would so far extend his regard upon the posterity (upon such a posterity, so untoward, so unworthy) of his friend, as God did upon that of Abraham, in respect unto him? What great prince would employ his principal courtiers to guard and serve a poor attendant, a mean subject of his? Yet, *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them;*[y] and many instances we have of those glorious inhabitants of heaven by God's appointment stooping down to wait upon and to perform service to the sons of men. But upon examples of this nature, being numberless, and composing indeed the main body of the sacred history (it being chiefly designed to represent them), I shall not insist; I shall only observe, for preventing or satisfying objections (yea, indeed, for turning them to the advantage and conformation of that which we assert), that even in those cases, wherein God's highest severity hath been exercised, when God hath purposed to exhibit most dreadful instances of his justice upon the most provocative occasions; we may discern his goodness eminently showing itself:* that even in the greatest extremity of his displeasure, in his acts of highest vengeance, *mercy* doth κατακαυχᾶσθαι τῆς κρίσεως (as St. James speaketh), *boast itself and triumph over justice:*[z] that God, as the sun (to use Tertullian's similitude), when he seems most to infest and scorch us, doth even then dispense useful and healthful influences upon us.† Even, I say,

[t] 2 Cor. xiii. 11; i. 3; 1 Pet. v. 10; Eph. ii. 4; James v. 11; 1 John iv. 8.

[u] Luke vi. 35,—For he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

[v] Psal. xxxvi. 6; ciii. 11, 13.

[w] Deut. xxxii. 10; Zech. ii. 8.

[x] John xv. 14; 2 Chron. xx. 7.

* Γίνεται φιλανθρωπία ἡ τιμωρία· οὕτω γὰρ ἐγὼ πείθομαι κολάζειν τὸν Θεόν.—Naz. Orat. 38.

Ἐγὼ τοσαύτην περίουσιαν εἶναι φημὶ τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ κηδεμονίας, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἀφ' ὧν ἐτίμησεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφ' ὧν ἐκόλασεν ὁμοίως ἡμᾶς δύνασθαι τὴν ἀγαθότητα αὐτοῦ δεικνύναι, καὶ τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ζ'.

Ὁ Θεὸς ἀπαθὴς ὤν, κἂν εὐεργετῇ, κἂν κολάζῃ, ὁμοίως ἐστὶν ἀγαθός.—Ibid.

† Tunc maxime est optimus, cum tibi non bonus; sicut sol tibi etiam quando non putas optimus et utilis, &c.—*Tertull. in Marc.* ii. 2.

[y] Psal. xxxiv. 7.

[z] James ii. 13.

in the most terrible and amazing examples of divine justice (such as were the ejecting and excluding mankind from Paradise; the general destruction in the deluge; the exscinding and extirpation of the Amorites, together with other inhabitants of Canaan; the delivering Israel and Judah into the Assyrian thraldom;[a] the final destruction of Jerusalem, together with the dispersion of the Jewish nation over the world, and its sad consequences) we may (not hardly) observe particulars, more than savouring of great mercy and goodness.

1. That (in most of these cases, in all according to some account) God was not moved to the displeasure productive of those effects but upon very great considerations. That he did not seek advantages, nor embrace all occasions; but was incensed by superlative degrees of iniquity and impurity (such in their own nature, and much aggravated by their circumstances), such as rendered common life inconvenient and insupportable to men; made the earth to stink with their filth and corruption; to groan under the burden and weight of them; to pant and labour for a riddance from them.

2. That God did not upon the first glimpses of provocation proceed to the execution and discharge of his wrath, but did with wonderful patience expect a change in the offenders, *waiting to be gracious*, as the prophet speaketh;[b] affording more than competent time, and means more than sufficient of appeasing him by repentance; vouchsafing frequent admonitions, solicitations, threatenings, moderate corrections, and other such proper methods conducing to their amendment and to their preservation.

3. That the inflictions themselves, how grievous soever in appearance, were not really extreme in measure; not accompanied with so acute torments, nor with so lingering pains, nor with so utter a ruin, as might have been inflicted; but that (as Ezra, in respect to one of those cases, confesseth) they *were less than their iniquities deserved.*[c] That, as it is in the Psalm, *He did not stir up all his wrath;*[d] which would have immediately consumed them, or infinitely tormented them.

4. That (consequently upon some of those premises) the afflictions brought upon them were in a sort rather necessary than voluntary in respect of him; rather a natural fruit of their dispositions and dealings, than a free result of his will; however contrary to his primary intentions and desires. Whence he no less truly than earnestly disclaims having any pleasure in their death, that he *afflicted willingly, or grieved the children of men;* and charges their disasters upon themselves, as the sole causes of them.[e]

5. That further, the chastisements inflicted were wholesome and profitable, both in their own nature, and according to his design;* both in respect to the generality of men (who by them were warned, and by such examples deterred from incurring the like mischiefs; were kept from the inconveniences, secured from the temptations, the violences, the allurements, the contagions of the present evil state; according to that reason alleged for punishments of this kind; *All the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously,*[f]) and in regard to the sufferers themselves, who thereby were prevented from proceeding further in their wicked courses;† accumulating (or *treasuring up*, as the apostle speaketh) further degrees of *wrath,*[g] as obdurate and incorrigible people will surely do: (*Why*, saith the prophet, *should ye be stricken any more?*[h] (to what purpose is moderate correction?) *Ye will revolt more and more.*) That he did with a kind of violence to his own inclinations, and reluctancy, inflict punishments on them. *O Ephraim, how shall I give thee up, O Ephraim!*[i] Yea further:

6. That, during their sufferance, God did bear compassion toward them who underwent it. *His bowels* (as we are told) *sounded and were troubled;* his *heart was turned within him;* his *repentings were kindled together; in all their*

[a] *Vide* Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 8, p. 63, optime.
[b] Isa. xxx. 18.
[c] Ez. ix. 13.
[d] Psal. lxxviii. 38.

* Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ζ.——Ὁμοῦ καὶ δικαστὴς καὶ ἰατρὸς καὶ διδάσκαλός ἐστιν ὁ Θεός.—Ibid.

† Ἐπιτίθησι τιμωρίαν, οὐ τῶν ἀπελθόντων ἀκαιρῶν ἕνεκεν, ἀλλὰ τὰ μέλλοντα διορθούμενος.—Chrys. tom. viii. p. 99.

[e] Ezek. xviii. 23, 32; xxxiii. 11; Lam. iii. 33; Hos. xiii. 9.
[f] Deut. xvii 13.
[g] Rom. ii. 5.
[h] Isa. i. 5; xxvi. 10.
[i] Hos. xi. 8.

afflictions himself was afflicted; he remembered, and considered they were but dust; that they *were but flesh* (that they were but of a weak and frail temper; that they were naturally prone to corruption and evil), and did therefore pity their infirmity and their misery.[j]

7. That God *in his wrath remembered mercy*[k] (as the prophet Habakkuk speaks), mixing gracious intentions of future refreshment and reparation with the present executions of justice. *I know* (saith he in the prophet Jeremiah) *the thoughts that I think towards you; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Behold, I will bring health and cure, I will cure them, and will reveal unto them abundance of peace and truth.*[l] And, *For a small moment* (saith he again in Isaiah) *have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.*[m] And, *Ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem*—and, *ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it*, saith the Lord (he saith so in Ezekiel;) *without cause*, that is, without a beneficial design toward them.[n]

8. Lastly, That he always signified a readiness to turn from his anger, and to forgive them; and upon very equal and easy terms to be fully reconciled to them; according to that in the Psalm, *He doth not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever;*[o] but upon any reasonable overtures of humiliation, confession, and conversion to him, was ready to abate, yea, to remove the effects of his displeasure: *Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.*[p]

These particulars, if we attentively survey those dreadful examples of divine severity forementioned (the greatest which history acquaints us with, or which have been showed on this theatre of human affairs), we may observe most of them in all, all of them in some, either plainly expressed, or sufficiently insinuated by the circumstances observable in the historical narrations concerning them; so that even the harshest instances of God's wrathful dealing with some men, may well serve to the illustration of his mercy and goodness toward all men; may evince it true, what our Lord affirms, that God is *χρηστὸς ἐπὶ ἀχαρίστους καὶ πονηροὺς, kind and beneficent even to the most ungrateful and unworthy persons.*[q] To make which observation good, and consequently to assert the verity of our text (that *God is good unto all, and merciful over all his works*) against the most plausible exceptions, I shall examine the particulars in the following discourse.

[j] Isa. lxiii. 9, 15; Hos. xi. 8; Jer. xxxi. 20; Gen. vi. 3; viii. 21; Psal. ciii. 14; lxxviii. 39.
[k] Hab. iii. 2.
[l] Gen. vi. 3; viii. 21; Jer. xxix. 11; xxxiii. 6.
[m] Isa. liv. 7.
[n] Ezek. xiv. 21.
[o] Psal. ciii. 9.
[p] Psal. xcix. 8.

SERMON LXIX.

OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

PSALM cxlv. 9.—*The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.*

I SHALL now more particularly consider the several instances before mentioned.

I. The punishment inflicted on mankind for the first transgression containeth in it much of depth and mystery, surpassing perhaps all capacity of man to reach; its full comprehension being by divine wisdom, I conceive, purposely concealed from us; so that I cannot pretend thoroughly to explain it, and shall not therefore speak much about it.

This indeed is clear, that God did, in his proceedings occasioned thereby, intend remarkably to evidence his grievous resentment and indignation against wilful disobedience; yet in the management thereof we may observe, that,

1. After that provocation (in itself so high, and liable to so great aggravations) God did express his resentment in so calm and gentle a manner, that Adam, though abashed upon the conscience of his fault, was not yet by the vehemency of the reproof utterly dismayed or dejected.*

2. God used great moderation in the infliction of this punishment; mitigating the extremity of the sentence justly decreed and plainly declared to Adam (that,

* *Vide* Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ζ'. Οὐ γὰρ εἶπε, καθάπερ εἰκὸς ἦν ὑβρισμένον εἰπεῖν, ὦ μιαρὲ, καὶ παμμίαρε, &c. —Ibid.

[q] Luke vi. 35.

in case of his offending against the law prescribed him, he should immediately die), for notwithstanding his forfeiture that very day of life, God reprieved him, and allowed him a long life, almost of a thousand years, after.[a]

3. God did not quite reject man thereupon, nor did withdraw his fatherly care and providence from him, but openly continued them; insomuch that, immediately after the curse pronounced upon our first parents, the next passage we meet with is, that unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats, and clothed them.[b]

4. Although indeed man was by his fault a great loser, and became deprived of high advantages; yet the mercy of God did leave him in no very deplorable estate, simply considered, as to his life here; the relics of his first estate, and the benefits continued to him, being very considerable; so that we the inheritors of that great disaster do commonly find the enjoyments of life, with the conveniences attending it, to be sweet and desirable.

5. The event manifests, that while God in appearance so severely punished mankind, he did in his mind reserve thoughts of highest kindness toward us; even then designing not only to restore us to our former degree, but to raise us to a capacity of obtaining a far more high pitch of happiness. While he excluded us from a terrestrial paradise here, he provided a far better celestial one, into which, if we please, by obedience to his holy laws we may certainly enter. So that in this of all most heavy instance of vengeance, God's exceeding goodness and clemency do upon several considerations most clearly shine.

II. The calamity, which by the general deluge did overflow the world, was not (we may consider) brought upon men but in regard to the most enormous offences long continued in, and after amendment was become desperate: not till after much forbearance, and till men were grown to a superlative pitch of wickedness, by no fit means (by no friendly warning, no sharp reprehension, no moderate chastisement) corrigible; not until the earth was become (especially for persons of any innocence or integrity) no tolerable habitation, but a theatre of lamentable tragedies, a seat of horrid iniquity, a sink of loathsome impurity. So that in reason it was to be esteemed rather a favour to mankind to rescue it from so unhappy a state, than to suffer it to persist therein. To snatch men away out of so uncomfortable a place, from so wretched a condition, was a mercy; it had been a judgment to have left them annoying, rifling, and harassing; biting, tearing, and devouring; yea, defiling and debauching each other; and so heaping upon themselves loads of guilt, and deeper obligations to vengeance. *The earth* (saith the text) *was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth;*[c] which universal and extreme corruption had not in probability sprung up in a small time; for,

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus,——

is true not only of single men, but of communities; no people, no age doth suddenly degenerate into extreme degrees of wickedness; so that the divine patience had long endured and attended upon men before the resolution of thus punishing them was taken up; the which also was not at first peremptory and irreversible, but in God's design and desire it was revocable; for the world had a long reprieve after the sentence passed; execution was deferred till Noah's long preaching of righteousness, and denouncing of judgment in a manner so notorious and signal (not by verbal declarations only, but by the visible structure of the ark), could prevail nothing toward their amendment, but was either distrusted or disregarded, and perhaps derided by them. For, as St. Peter tells us, *they were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing;*[d] that is (as is collected by several interpreters from the text of the story), during no less then one hundred and twenty years;[e] a competent time for their recollecting themselves, and endeavouring by amendment of life to prevent the ruin threaten-

[a] Gen. ii. 17.
[b] Gen. iii. 21.
[c] Gen. vi. 11, 12.
[d] 1 Pet. iii. 20; 2 Pet. ii. 5.
[e] Gen. v. 3.

ed to come upon them. Yet notwithstanding that, this obstinate and incorrigible disobedience did so much displease God, as that in consideration thereof God is said to have *repented that he made men upon the earth*,[f] and to have been thereby grieved at the heart: yet did he so temper his anger as not utterly to destroy mankind, but provided against its total ruin, by preserving one family as a seminary thereof; preserving the father thereof (questionless by a special grace) from the spreading contagion, inspiring him with faith, and qualifying him for the favour which by him he designed to communicate unto the world; the reparation thereof, and restoring the generations of men. So that also through this passage of providence, how dismal and dreadful soever at first sight, much goodness will be transparent to him that looks upon it attentively.

III. In the next place, as to the extermination and excision of the Canaanites, which carries so horrible an appearance of severity, we may find it qualifiable, if we consider, that, for the nature of the trespasses, which procured it, they were insufferably heinous and abominable;[g] most sottish, barbarous, and base superstitions (cruelty and impurity being essential ingredients into their performances of religion, and it being piety with them to be exceedingly wicked), and in their other practice most beastly lasciviousnesses, most bloody violences, oppressions, and rapines generally abounding. So that for those men themselves, who were by turns, as it happened, the authors and the objects of these dealings, it could not be desirable to continue in a state of living so wretched and uncomfortable. Impunity had been no mercy to such people, but rather a cruelty; cutting them off must needs be the greatest favour they were capable of, it being only removing them from a hell here, and preventing their deserving many worse hells hereafter. Even to themselves it was a favour, and a greater one to their posterity, whom they might have brought forth to succeed in their courses, and to the consequences of them; whom they would have engaged into their wicked customs, and their woful mischiefs. They were not so destroyed from the land, until it grew uninhabitable in any tolerable manner, and itself could not, as it were, endure them any longer, but (as the text doth most significantly express it) *did spue them out*;[h] being like a stomach surcharged with foul or poisonous matter which it loathes and is pained with, and therefore naturally labours to expel. Neither was his sad doom executed upon them till after four hundred years of forbearance; for even in Abraham's time God took notice of their iniquity, then born and growing; and gave account of his suspending their punishment; *because* (said he) *the iniquity of the Amorites*[i] was not yet full (that is, was not yet arrived to a pitch of desperate obstinacy and incorrigibility:) while there was the least glimpse of hope, the least relics of any reason, any regret, any shame in them, the least possibility of recovery, God stopped his avenging hand: but when all ground of hope was removed, the whole stock of natural light and strength was embezzled, all fear, all remorse, all modesty were quite banished away, all means of cure had proved ineffectual, the gangrene of vice had seized on every part, iniquity was grown mature and mellow; then was the stroke of justice indeed not more seasonable than necessary; then was the fatal sword the only proper remedy; then so with one stroke to cut off them, and their sins, and their mischiefs, and their miseries together, was an argument no less strong and clear of God's merciful goodness, than of his just anger toward them.

IV. The like account we may render of God's judgments upon the people of Israel. If we consult the prophets, who declare the state of things, the facts, the dispositions, the guilts, that brought them down from heaven, we shall see that they came upon account of an universal apostasy from both the faith and practice of true religion; *a deep corruption* (*like that in the days of Gibeah*,[j] as the prophet Hosea speaketh) in mind and manners; an utter perverting of all truth and right; an obstinate compliance with, or emulation of, the most abominable practices of the heathen nations about them:

[f] Gen. vi. 6.
[g] Levit. xviii.
[h] Levit. xviii. 28.
[i] Gen. xv. 16.
[j] Hos. xi. 9.

an universal apostasy, I say, from God and all goodness; a thorough prevalence of all iniquity. Hear the prophets expressing it, and describing them: Jeremiah; *Run ye to and fro, through the streets of Jerusalem; see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.*[k] Isaiah; *The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant: Ah sinful nation! a people laden with iniquities, a seed of evil doers; children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger; they are gone away backward,*[l] &c. Thus do these and other prophets in a like strain describe in the gross the state of things preceding those judgments. And in Ezekiel (in divers places, particularly in the 8th, but especially in the 22d chapter) we have their offences in detail, and by parts (their gross impieties, their grievous cruelties, extortions, and oppressions) set out copiously, and in most lively colours.[m] And as the quality of their provocations was so bad, and the extension of them so large, so was their condition desperate; there were no means of remedy left, no hopes of amendment; so was their forehead covered with impudence, their heart hardened with obstinacy, their minds deeply tinctured with habitual pravity and perverseness: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil*, saith Jeremiah concerning them.[n] All methods of reclaiming them had proved fruitless: no favourable dealings, no gentle admonition or kind instruction would avail any thing; for it is of them the prophet Isaiah saith, *Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.*[o] No advices, no reproofs (how frequent, how vehement, how urgent soever), had any effect upon them. Almighty God declares often, that he had spoken unto them rising up early, but they would not hear nor regard his speech; did not only neglect and refuse, but *despise, loathe, mock*, and *reproach* it (*turning their back upon him, pulling away their shoulder, stiffening their neck, and stopping their ears, that they should not hear;*) *that he had spread out his hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainsaying people; to a people that* (with extreme insolence and immodesty) *provoked him to anger continually to his face.*[p] Nor could any tenders of mercy allure or move them: *I said* (God said it in Jeremiah) *after all these things, Turn unto me; but she returned not. Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin;*[q] and innumerable the like overtures we have of grace and mercy to them; all which they proudly and perversely rejected, persisting in their wicked courses; they even repelled and silenced, they rudely treated and persecuted, the prophets sent unto them with messages of kind warning and overtures of grace;[r] so obstructing all access of mercy to themselves: *They say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things;* so Isaiah reports their proceeding. *Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?*[s] so St. Stephen expostulates with them. Neither were gentler chastisements, designed for their correction and cure, anywise available;[t] they made no impression on them, they produced no change in them: *In vain* (saith God) *I have smitten your children, they have received no correction.*[u] And, *Thou hast smitten them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return.*[v] And, *The people turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they*

[k] Jer. v. 1.
[l] Isa. xxiv. 5; i. 4.
[m] Ezek. xxii.
[n] Jer. xiii. 23.
[o] Isa. xxvi. 10.
[p] Jer. xxv. 4; xxxii. 33; vi. 10; Zech. vii. 11; Neh. ix. 29, 30; Isa. lxv. 2; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.
[q] Jer. iii. 7; vii. 3; iv. 1, 14; xviii. 11; xxvi. 13.
[r] Jer. xi. 21; xxxii. 30.
[s] Matt. xxiii. 37; Ezek. xviii.; Isa. xxx. 10; Acts vii. 52.
[t] Isa. i. 16, 17, &c. (Neh. ix. 29.)
[u] Jer. v. 3.
[v] Jer. v. 3.

seek the Lord of Hosts.[w] Unto this καταρτισμὸς εἰς ἀπώλειαν, this perfect fitness (as St. Paul[x] speaketh), this maturity of desperate and irrecoverable impiety, had that people grown, not at once, and on a sudden, but by continual steps of provocation, through a long course of time, during that divine patience sparing them, and by various expedients striving to recover them. This consideration is frequently insisted upon, especially in the prophet Jeremiah: *The children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early, and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me,*[y] &c. Well then, after so many hundred years of abused patience and unsuccessful labour to reclaim them, it was needful that justice should have her course upon them: yet how then did God inflict it, with what mildness and moderation, with what pity and relenting! *Nevertheless* (say they in Nehemiah) *for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.*[z] And, *Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve,*[a] doth Ezra confess. *I will not execute the fierceness of my anger,*[b] doth God himself resolve and declare in Hosea. So mild he was as to the measure of his punishing: and what compassion accompanied it, those pathetical expressions declare: *My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him. In all their afflictions he was afflicted,*[c] &c. We may add, that notwithstanding all these provocations of his wrath, and abusings of his patience, which thus necessitated God to execute his vengeance; yet even during the execution thereof, and while his hand was stretched forth against them, he did retain thoughts of favour, and intentions of doing good, even toward this so ingrateful, so insensible, so incorrigible a people: *For a small moment* (saith God) *have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee: I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*[d] Now these things being seriously laid together, have we not occasion and ground sufficient, even in this instance, no less to admire and adore the wonderful benignity, mercy, and patience of God, than to dread and tremble at his justice?

V. As for the last so calamitous and piteous destruction of Jerusalem, with the grievous consequences thereof, as we might apply thereto the former considerations, so we shall only observe what was peculiar in that case; that God dispensed such means to prevent it (to remove the meritorious causes thereof, obstinate impenitency and incredulity; resisting the truth by him sent from heaven with so clear a revelation and powerful confirmation; despising the Spirit of God, and the dictates of their own conscience; basely misusing divers ways, and at last cruelly murdering the Son of God;) such means, I say, God did employ for the removing those provocatives of vengeance, which, as our Lord himself saith, were sufficient to have converted Tyre and Sidon;[e] yea, to have preserved Sodom itself; so that our Saviour could with a compassionate grief deplore the unsuccessfulness of his tender affection, and solicitous care for their welfare, in these passionate terms: *How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, but ye would not!*[f] That St. John the Baptist's sharp reproofs, his powerful exhortations, his downright and clear forewarnings of what would follow (*Even now*, said he, *the axe is laid to the root of the tree,*[g]) attended with so remarkable circumstances of his person and his carriage (which induced all the world about him to regard him as no ordinary man, but a special instrument of God and messenger from heaven), did yet find no effect considera-

[w] Isa. ix. 13. [x] Rom. ix. 22.
[y] Jer. xxxii. 30; vii. 25; xvi. 12; xi. 7; Ezra ix. 7.
[z] Neh. ix. 31. [a] Ezra ix. 13.
[b] Hos xi. 9.
[c] Hos. xi. 8; Jer. xxxi. 20; Isa. lxiii. 9.
[d] Isa. liv. 7; Jer. xxix. 11; xxxiii. 6, 7.
[e] Matt. xi. 21.
[f] Matt. xxiii. 37. [g] Matt. iii. 10.

ble: the Pharisees and lawyers, those corrupt guides, whose authority managed the blind multitude, *defeating the counsel of God toward themselves*,[h] as St. Luke speaketh (that is, defeating his gracious purpose of reclaiming them from disobedience, and consequently of withholding the judgments imminent), they reviled the person of that venerable prophet; *He hath a devil*,[i] said they: they slighted his premonitions, and rejected his advices, by observing which, those dreadful mischiefs, which fell upon their rebellious heads, might have been averted. We may add, that even those fearful judgments were tempered with mixtures of favourable design, not only to the community of mankind (which, by so remarkable a vengeance upon the persecutors of our Lord, and the scorners of his doctrine, was converted unto, or confirmed in, the Christian faith), but even toward that people whom it served to convince of their errors and crimes; to induce them to repentance, to provoke them unto the acknowledgment and embracing of God's truth, so palpably vindicated by him. So that I might here apply that passage of St. Paul (if not directly and adequately according to his sense, yet with no incongruous allusion at least), *have they stumbled, that they should fall?*[j] (or, was there no other design of God's judgments upon them but their utter ruin?) μὴ γένοιτο· *No such matter; but through their fall salvation came to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy* (or emulation.) And, in effect, as our Lord in the midst of his sufferings did affectionately pray for God's mercy upon them, as the apostles did offer reconciliation unto them all indifferently, who would repent and were willing to embrace it; so were such of them as were disposed to comply with those invitations received to grace, how deeply soever involved in the continued guilt of those enormous persecutions, injuries, and blasphemies; as particularly St. Paul, that illustrious example of God's patience and mercy in this case.[k] So that neither by this instance is any attribute of God more signalized than his transcendent goodness, in like manner as by the former instances, and in analogy to them, by all others that may be assigned. By all of them it will appear that God is primarily and of himself disposed to do all fitting and possible good to men, not to inflict evil more than is fit and necessary; that God is indeed *optimus ex naturæ proprietate* (*most good according to property of nature*), although *justus ex causæ necessitate* (*severe from the necessity of the case*), as Tertullian speaketh.[l] To afflict men (either some men singly, or whole societies of men) may be sometimes expedient upon several accounts; for vindicating the esteem, and supporting the interest of goodness, which may by impunity be disgraced, endamaged, endangered; for the discrimination of good and evil men in an observable manner; for the encouragement and comfort of the good, the reduction and amendment of the bad; for preventing the contagion, and stopping the progress of iniquity, whereupon greater guilts and worse mischiefs would ensue:* it may be as necessary as sharp physic to cure public or private distempers; as an instrument of rousing us out of our sinful lethargies; as that which may cause us better to understand ourselves, and more to remember God; as a ground of fearing God, and an inducement to believe his providence. For those and many such purposes, to bring upon men things distasteful to sense may be very requisite; nor doth the doing it anywise prejudice the truth of divine goodness, but rather confirms it, commends it, and advances its just esteem. It would be a fond indulgence, not a wise kindness; a cruel, rather than a loving pity, to deal otherwise. In fine, we are to consider that all the mischiefs we undergo, God doth not so much bring them on us as we do pull them on ourselves.† They are αὐθαιρετα πήματα, *affected* or *self-chosen mischiefs;* they are κακὰ βλαστήματα προαιρέσεως, *bad sprouts of our free choice*, as a Father calls them; they are (as anoth-

[h] Luke vii. 30.
[i] Matt. xi. 18.
[j] Rom. xi. 11.
[k] 1 Tim. i. 16.

* *Basil. Orat.*—Quod Deus non est causa mali, eleganter, et pulchre de hac re.

† Πάντα κινεῖ καὶ πραγματεύεται ὁ Θεὸς, ὥστε ἡμᾶς ἀπαλλάξαι κολάσεως, καὶ τιμωρίας.—*Chrys.* tom. viii. p. 100.

Wisd. i. 12; Carm. Pythag. Cyril. Hier. Damasc.

[l] De Resur. Carnis, c. 14.

er Father saith) ἑκουσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια ἔκγονα, *the unwilling offspring of wilful evils;* they are the certain results of our own will, or the natural fruits of our actions; actions which (however God desire, advise, command, persuade, entreat, excite) we do will, we are resolved to perform. *We in a manner* (as Salvian saith*) *do force God to do whatever he doeth in this kind; violently plucking down vengeance on our own heads; compelling the kind and merciful Lord, against his nature and will, to afflict us; not so much as giving him leave to spare us.* God vehemently disclaims himself to be the original cause; to design (according to absolute or primary intention), to desire, to delight in our grief, or our ruin.† *As I live, saith the Lord* (and surely, when God swears, we may believe that he is very serious), *I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. I call heaven to record this day against you, that I have set life and death before you: therefore choose life. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance. He made not death, nor hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living.*[m] God then, if we may believe him, is not the first author of our calamities. Who then? He tells us himself: *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself: thou hast fallen by thine own iniquity. Your sins have withholden good things from you. Our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not!*[n] The designs and the endeavours of God do tend to our welfare and salvation; it is our will and our actions which only procure our ruin: *It is we* that (as the Wise Man saith) *seek death in the error of our life, and pull down upon our own selves destruction.*[o] So that, to conclude this part of our discourse, even those passages of providence which at first glimpse appear most opposite or disadvantageous to the goodness of God* (or to our opinion and belief concerning it), do, being well sifted, nowise prejudice it, but rather serve to corroborate and magnify it.

I shall only further briefly touch (or rather but mention) the uses and effects, to the producing which, the consideration of God's goodness, in so manifold ways declared, should be applied.

1. It should beget in us hearty love and reverence toward God, in regard to this attribute, so excellent and amiable in itself, so beneficial and advantageous to us. What can we esteem, what can we love, if so admirable goodness doth not affect us? How prodigiously cold and hard is that heart which cannot be warmed and softened into affection by so melting a consideration!

2. It should produce, as grateful sense in our hearts, so real endeavours of thankful obedience in our lives. It should make us *walk worthy of God, to all well-pleasing, bringing forth fruit in every good work;*[p] taking heed of doing as did Hezekiah, of whom it is said, that *he rendered not according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; therefore was wrath upon him;*[q] that we may not have that expostulation justly applied unto us, *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?*[r]

3. It should engage us the more to fear God; complying with the prophet's admonition, *Fear the Lord and his goodness;*[s] considering that intimation of the Psalmist, *There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared;*[t] observing that advice of Samuel, *Only fear the Lord, and serve him; for consider what great things he hath done for you.*[u] For that indeed nothing is more terrible than goodness slighted, and patience abused.

4. It should humble, ashame, and grieve us, for having crossed and offended

* Nos vim Deo facimus iniquitatibus nostris; nos nolentem ulcisci cogimus. Deus enim pius et misericors est, et qui neminem velit perire, vel lædere, &c. *Salv.* lib. 5, et 8.

† Miseros nos si nec juranti Deo credimus.—*Hier.*

[m] Ezek. xviii. 30; xxxiii. 11; Deut. xxx. 19; Lam. iii. 33; Wisd. i. 13.

[n] Hos xiii. 9; xiv. 1; Jer. v. 25; Isa. lxiv. 6; Matt. xxiii. 37.

[o] Wisd. i. 12.

* St. Chrysostom in divers places doth insist upon the goodness of God in making and threatening hell itself:—Τῆς βασιλείας οὐκ ἔλαττον, ἡ τῆς γεέννης ἀπειλὴ δείκνυσιν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀγαθότητα, &c. Ἀνδρ. ζ'.

[p] Col. i. 10.

[q] 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

[r] Deut. xxxii. 6.

[s] Hos. iii. 5.

[t] Psal. cxxx. 4.

[u] 1 Sam. xii. 24.

such exceeding goodness and mercy. It should cause us greatly to detest our sins, which lie under so heinous an aggravation; to be deeply displeased with ourselves, who have so unworthily committed them.

5. It should therefore render us wary and vigilant against the commission of any sin; that is, of incurring the guilt of so enormous ingratitude and baseness; making us cautious of doing like those, of whom it is confessed in Nehemiah, *They did eat, and were filled, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness: nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy laws behind their back.*[v]

6. It should also breed and nourish in us faith and hope in God. For what reason can we have to distrust of so great goodness; that he will refuse to help us in our need; that he will fail in accomplishment of his promises; that he will withhold what is convenient for us? It should preserve us from despair. What temptation can we have to despair of mercy, if we heartily repent of our misdoings, and sincerely endeavour to please him?*

7. It should upon the same account excite us to a free and constant exercise of all devotions. For why should we be shy or fearful of entering into so friendly and favourable a presence? why should we be backward from having (upon any occasion or need) a recourse to him, who is so willing, so desirous, so ready to do us good? what should hinder us from delighting in oblations of blessing and praise unto him?

8. It ought to render us submissive, patient, and contented under God's hand of correction or trial, as knowing that it cannot be without very just causes that such goodness seemeth displeased with us; that we are the chief causes of our suffering or our want; so that we can have no good cause to repine or complain: for, *Wherefore doth the living man complain? since a man* (suffers) *for the punishment of his sins;* since it is *our sins that withhold good things from us;*[w] since also we, considering this attribute, may be assured that all God's dispensations do aim and tend to our good.

9. It should also, in gratitude toward God, and imitation of him, engage us to be good, kind, and bountiful, placable, and apt to forgive; meek and gentle, pitiful, and affectionate toward our brethren; *to be good and merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful and benign even* toward the wicked and ungrateful; to be *kind unto one another, full of bowels, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.*[x]

10. Lastly, we ought to have an especial care of perverting this excellent truth by mistakes and vain presumptions; that we *do not turn the grace of God into wantonness,*[y] or occasion of licentious practice. Because God is very good and merciful, we must not to conceive him to be fond, or slack, or careless; that he is apt to indulge us in sin, or connive at our presumptuous transgression of his laws. No; ἕπεται τῷ ἀγαθῷ. ἢ ἀγαθὸν ἡ μισοπονηρία (*the hatred of wickedness is consequent upon goodness even as such*, as Clemens Alexandrinus saith;) God, even as he is good, cannot but detest that which is opposite and prejudicial to goodness; he cannot but maintain the honour and interest thereof; he cannot, he will not, endure us to dishonour him, to wrong our neighbour, to spoil ourselves. As he is a sure friend to us as his creatures, so he is an implacable enemy to us as impenitent rebels and apostates from our duty. *The wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.* As he is infinitely benign, so he is also perfectly *holy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him. The foolish shall not stand in his sight; he hateth all workers of iniquity. His face is against them that do evil.*[z] Finally, as God is gracious to all such as are capable of his love, and qualified for his mercy; so he is an impartial and upright Judge, who will deal with men according to their deserts, according to the tenor of his laws and ordinances; according to his immutable decree and word: so that as we have great reason to

* *Vide* Chrys. ad Theod. ii. tom. 6, p.63, optime et fuse.—Matt. vii. 11.

[v] Neh. ix. 25, 26.

[w] Lam. iii. 39; Jer. v. 25.

[x] Luke vi. 35, 36; 1 John iii. 16; Coloss. iii. 13; Eph. iv. 32.

[y] Jude 4.

[z] Psal. xi. 5; Hab. i. 13; Psal. v. 4, 5; xxxiv. 16.

trust and hope in him, so we have no true ground to presume upon him, vainly to trifle, or insolently to dally with him.

But I leave this point to be further improved by your meditations.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERMON LXX.

NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.

ROM. ii. 11.—*For there is no respect of persons with God.*

It is an ordinary conceit, grounded on a superficial view of things, that Almighty God dispenseth his gifts with great inequality, and dealeth very partially with men; being lavish in his bounty to some, but sparing therein to others; slack and indulgent in calling some to account, but rigorous and severe in judgment toward others.

Which imagination often hath influence upon the affections and the actions of men; so that hence some men do highly presume, others are much discouraged: some are apt to boast themselves special darlings and favourites of Heaven;[a] others are tempted to complain of their being quite deserted, or neglected thereby.

But whoever more carefully will observe things, and weigh them with good conisideration, shall find this to be a great mistake; and that in truth God distributeth his favours with very equal measures: he poiseth the scales of justice with a most even hand; so that reasonably no man should be exalted, no man should be dejected in mind, upon account of any considerable difference in God's regard towards him and other persons;[b] the which is clearly discovered by God, or merely dependeth on his will and providence.

The advantages which one man hath above another, being estimated morally, in reference to solid felicity and content, are indeed none; or are not absolutely made by God, but framed by men unto themselves. For

God is indifferently affected toward persons as such nakedly and privately considered; or as divested of moral conditions, qualifications, and actions: he is in his dealing, whether as benefactor or judge, purely considereth the reason and exigency of things, the intrinsic worth of persons, the real merits of each cause; he maketh no arbitrary or groundless descriminations; he neither loveth and favoureth, nor loatheth and discountenanceth any person unaccountably: he doth utterly disclaim partiality, or respect of persons, as a calumnious aspersion on him, and a scandal to his providence.

Such in holy scriptures he representeth himself, upon various occasions; declaring his perfect impartiality, and that nothing beside the right and reason of cases doth sway with him; all other considerations being impertinent and insignificant to him. For instance,

It is declared, that he hath no partial respect to nations;[c] for the piety of Job, an Edomite; of Melchisedeck, a Canaanite; of Jethro, a Midianite; were very pleasing to him: he favourably did hear the prayers and accept the alms of Cornelius, a Roman soldier; whereupon St. Peter made this general reflection: *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*[d]

He is declared not to regard the external profession of true religion, but real practice according to it: *He rendereth* (saith St. Paul) *to every man according to his deeds—tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for* (addeth the apostle, assigning the reason of this proceeding) *there is no respect of persons with God.*[e]

He is said not *to respect faces*, or any exterior appearances, however specious in

[a] Psal. lxxiii. 6. [b] Job xxxi. 6.

[c] (Rom. x. 12; iii. 29.) [d] Acts x. 34, 35.
[e] (Gal. v. 6; vi. 15; iii. 28;) Col. iii. 11; Rom. ii. 6, 9, 10, 11; (x. 12; iii. 29.)

the eye of the world; according to that saying of God to Samuel, at the choice of David before his brethren: *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart.*[f]

It is expressed, that he hath no respect to the outward estate or worldly rank and dignity of men; but that princes and peasants, masters and servants, the honourable or wealthy, and the mean or poor, are of equal consideration with him: *He* (saith Job) *accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands;*[g] and St. Paul biddeth masters to deal fairly with their servants, *knowing* (saith he) *that your Master is also in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*[h]

We are taught, that he doth not regard even the most sacred offices, or more worthy accomplishments of men, in prejudice to the verity of things, or equity of the case; for hence St. Paul maintaineth his resolute behaviour toward those great pillars of religion, St. Peter and St. James: *Of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person.*[i]

It is frequently inculcated, that he hath no consideration of any gifts, of sacrifices, of services presented to him with sinister intent, to compound for sin, or excuse from duty, to pervert justice, or palliate wrong; according to that [declaration of Moses, *The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward;*[j] and that] charge of king Jehoshaphat to his Judges, *Let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed, and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.*[k] and, *Do not think* (saith the Hebrew Wise Man) *to corrupt* (him) *with gifts; for such he will not receive; and trust not to unrighteous sacrifices; for the Lord is judge, and with him is no respect of persons.*[l]

In fine, it is often generally declared, that God impartially dispenseth recompenses, in just proportion, according to the deeds of men: *He* (saith St. Paul) *that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons: And if* (saith St. Peter) *ye call upon the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.*[m]

There is nothing more frequently asserted, or more seriously urged in holy scripture than this point, that God will judge and deal with men, not according to his absolute, antecedent affections, but *according to their own works*, or the tenor of their practice, duly scanned and estimated by the rules of justice; so that the really better man will certainly prove the happier, and the worse man shall be the more wretched: *He will reward every man* (saith our Lord) κατὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν αὐτοῦ, *according to his practice: Every one* (saith St. Paul) *shall receive the things done in his body,* πρὸς τὰ ἔργα, *suitably* (in just proportion) *to his works;* and *each man shall receive* ἴδιον μισθὸν, *his own wages according to his own labour; and then praise* (or a due taxation) *shall be to every man from God: Behold* (saith he in the Revelation) *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to recompense each man* ὡς τὸ αὐτοῦ ἔργον ἔσται, *as his work shall be.*[n]

Wherefore by sacred testimonies it is abundantly manifest, that impartiality is a divine attribute and perfection of God; the which (for our greater satisfaction and further illustration of the point) may be also evinced by divers arguments, some proving that it must be so, others, showing that it is so; some inferring it *a priori*, from the prime, most avowed attributes of God's nature, and from his relations to men; others arguing it *a poster-*

[f] 1 Sam. xvi. 7.
[g] Job xxxiv. 19; Wisd. vi. 7.
[h] Eph. vi. 9; Coloss. iii. 25; iv. 1.
[i] Gal. ii. 6.
[j] Deut. x. 17.
[k] 2 Chron. xix. 7.
[l] Ecclus. xxxv. 12; (Isa. i. 3; lxi. 8; lxvi. 3; Prov. xv. 8; xxi. 27; Amos v. 21., 22; Jer. vi. 20; Mic. vi. 7, 8; Hos. vi. 6.)
[m] Rom. ii. 11; Col. iii. 25; 1 Pet. i. 17.
[n] Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; Rev. ii. 23; xx. 12; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Cor. iii. 8; (Jer. xvii. 10; xxxii. 19; Psal. lxii. 12; 1 Cor. iv. 5; Rev. xxii. 12.

iori, from principal instances of God's proceedings and providential dispensations toward men.

Of the first sort are these:—

1. God is impartial, because he is perfectly wise, and thence doth truly estimate persons and things.

Wisdom doth look evenly, with a free and pure (an indifferent and uncorrupt) eye upon all things; apprehending and esteeming each as it is in itself; making no distinction where it findeth none; not preferring one thing before another, without ground of difference in them. It doth not fix a valuation on its objects, but acknowledgeth it, and taketh it for such as it is in themselves.

Wherefore God cannot have any blind affection or fondness toward any person grounded on no reason, or upon any unaccountable prejudice. No person can seem amiable or odious to him, who is not in himself truly such.

This argument is often used in scripture; and to assure us of this truth it is there frequently affirmed, that God doth search the hearts, doth try the spirits, doth weigh the actions of men: *The Lord* (said Hannah) *is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed: All the ways of man* (saith Solomon) *are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirit: His eyes* (saith the Psalmist) *behold, his eyelids try the children of men:* and, *O Lord of hosts* (saith Jeremiah), *that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart—Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:* [*I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*[o]]

2. God cannot be partial, because he is perfectly righteous, just, and holy. This reason adjoined to the former doth make up a complete demonstration: for partiality doth proceed either from blindness of mind, or from perverseness of will; he, therefore, who hath both an axact knowledge of things and a perfect rectitude of will, can nowise be partial; the one enabling him to judge, the other disposing him to affect things as they are and deserve; to esteem and love that which is indeed worthy and lovely; to despise and dislike that which is despicable and odious; to have no opinion or affection toward a person, abstracted from all qualifications; such an one being no special object of a wise and just either esteem or contempt, love or hatred.

As these causes are always inseparably connected (for what is justness, but a disposition of will to follow, without deflection, the dictates of wisdom?) so the effect must necessarily follow; according to numberless testimonies in scripture, importing, that *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth: The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous—but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.*[p]

3. God is impartial, because he is infinitely great and potent; whence all creatures are in the same degree inferior, at the same distance remote from him; all are equally at his discretion and disposal; he hath no need of any: what, therefore, should incline him to regard one before another, excepting only goodness, wherein he delighteth? So the Wise Man discourseth: *He that is Lord of all shall fear no man's person, neither shall he stand in awe of any man's greatness; for he hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike.*[q] So Moses did imply: *The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons.*[r]

4. God is impartial, because he is immensely good and benign; both intensively in the degree, and extensively as to the objects of his goodness; so that he favoureth all equally, because all thoroughly, so far as may well be, according to their condition and capacity; whence if there be any difference or defect, the ground thereof is not in his nature or will, but in the different qualifications of creatures.[s]

There is a double goodness or love of God: one absolute, preceding all regard

[o] 1 Sam. ii. 3; Prov. xvi. 2; Psal. xi. 4; Jer. xi. 20; xx. 12; xxxii. 19; xvii. 10.

[p] Psal. xi. 7; (vii. 11; xxxiii. 5; xlv. 7; cxlvi. 8;) xi. 5; xxxiv. 15, 16.

[q] Wisd. vi. 7.

[r] Deut. x. 17.

[s] Exod. xxiv. 6, 7; Numb. xiv. 18; Psal. lxxxvi. 5, 15; ciii. 8; cxlv. 8.

to personal qualities or deeds; the other conditionate, and consequent on special regards: in both these, God is impartial; for the first is general and unconfined, according to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works;* and those sayings in the gospel, *He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil: He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*[t] The second is grounded on special reasons of the case, and adapted to the rules of justice demanding it; according whereto, *The Lord is rich* (in mercy) *toward all that call upon him. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, and preserveth all them that love him.*[u]

In the first there is no difference; in the second the difference is made by ourselves, being founded in our voluntary demeanour.

5. God is impartial toward all persons, because he hath the same (natural and original) relations toward all.

1. He is the maker and father of all; according to that of the prophet, *Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?* and that of the apostle, There is *one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all:*[v] he therefore hath the same parental kindness toward all, the same tenderness for the good of each; he is not capable of that imperfection which is observable in some parents, to be fond and indulgent to some children above others; but in his affection *the rich and poor* (as the Wise Man saith) *do meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.*[w]

Hence Job did collect, that *God accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for,* (saith he) *they are all the work of his hands.*[x]

Hence the same holy man did infer, that he was obliged to deal fairly with his own servants, for that God in judgment would consider their case no less than his, upon this account,[y] for, *Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?*[z]

Hence the Wise Man, who imitated Solomon, did argue an equality of gracious providence toward all: *He hath made the small and the great, and careth for all alike.*[a]

2. God is the common Lord of all; and therefore is concerned to protect all with the like care, to govern all with the same equity.

Hence St. Paul gathereth, that God is indifferently willing to show mercy and dispense blessings to all people; to confer the means of salvation, and to accept pious endeavours, without distinction of Jew or Gentile: *Is he* (saith he) *the God of the Jews only? Is it not also of the Gentiles?* And, *There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*[b]

Hence the same apostle doth urge masters to be just and kind to their servants; for that God, as the common Master, hath an equal respect to both, *knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.*[c]

3. God is *the Saviour of all;* desiring and designing that *all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth;* being *willing that no man should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*[d]

Wherefore out of philanthropy and love to mankind, he sent his Son to be *the Saviour of the world; to give himself a ransom for all men, to taste death for every man.*[e]

And what greater instance could there be of perfect impartiality?

So by reasons from the principal attributes and relations of God, his impartiality may be deduced: the same also may be declared from his proceedings and dealings with men. For,

1. God hath proposed to all men indifferently the same terms and conditions of obtaining his love and favour, of en-

[t] Psal. cxlv. 9, 16; Luke vi. 35; Matt. v. 45.
[u] Rom. x. 12; Psal. cxlv. 18; xxxiv. 15; cxlv. 19, 20; xxxiv. 9; xxxiii. 18.
[v] Mal. ii. 10; Ephes. iv. 6.
[w] Prov. xxii. 2. [x] Job xxxiv. 19.
[y] Job xxxi. 13, 14, 15.
[z] Job xxxi. 15. [a] Wisd. vi. 7.
[b] Rom. iii. 29; Rom. x. 12.
[c] Ephes. vi. 9.
[d] 1 Tim. iv. 10; ii. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 9.
[e] Tit. ii. 11; 1 John iv. 14; Luke ix. 56; John iii. 17; xii. 47; 2 Cor. v. 19; 1 Tim. ii. 7; Heb. ii. 9.

joying his bounty and mercy, of obtaining rewards and felicity from him.[f]

The same laws and rules of life are prescribed to all persons, as men and as Christians.

The natural dictates of reason, the precepts of holy scripture, the great moral duties of religion, by observance whereof God's favour is retained, and salvation assured, are of general concern and common obligation to all without exception.

God hath not framed one law, or one gospel, for princes and great men, another for peasants and mean artisans; he hath not chalked out one way toward heaven for the rich, another for the poor to walk in; but all, *high and low, rich and poor, one with another*,[g] are tied to observe the precepts of piety, of charity, of justice, of temperance, sobriety, and chastity, of modesty, humility, and patience; none, great or small, can otherwise than by proceeding in the common road of virtuous practice, arrive to happiness. *He that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.*[h]

If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: Enter in through the strait gate: Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life: To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life will be conferred:[i] these are the grand infallible maxims, the fixed irreversible decrees, expressing the general duty and doom of mankind, according to the eternal reason of things, and the declared will of God Almighty, our sovereign Governor and Judge.

Whoever it is, that will please God, that will have his love, that will be happy by his grace, must humbly submit to God's will, must faithfully obey God's laws, must carefully walk in God's way;[j] from this course there can be no exemption, no dispensation, no special privilege, for any person whatever.

As all men naturally, by indissoluble bands of obligation, are the subjects and servants of God; so God indispensably and inexcusably doth require the same loyalty and fidelity, the same diligence, the same reverence from all.

Great men sometimes may live as if they conceited themselves free from the obligations which bind other men; as if they had not souls (as we poor mortals have) to be saved, or were to be saved in some other way; as if obedience to the divine laws doth not touch them, but only doth belong to the commonalty; as if they had special indulgence to live in pride, luxury, and sloth, might warrantably practice injustice, oppression, revenge; might *cum privilegio* be lewd and lascivious, withhold their debts, take God's name in vain, neglect devotion and the service of God: but in thus doing they much abuse themselves; for they no less than others are obnoxious to guilt and to punishment, for such misdemeanours against the divine laws. In truth, if there be any difference in the case, it is only this; that they, in all equity, ingenuity, and gratitude, are obliged to a more strict, more faithful, more diligent observance of God's laws; they being more indebted to God for his special bounty to them; they having larger talents and advantages committed to their trust, their deportment being of higher consequence, and most influential on the world, they being liable to render an account according to that just rule, *Unto whom much is given, of him much will be required;*[k] whence their eminency of condition doth not excuse them from common duties, but doth advance their obligation, will aggravate their neglect, will inflame their reckoning, will plunge them deeper into woful punishment; according to that of the Wise Man, *a sharp judgment shall be to them that are in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented.*[l]

2. All persons have the same means, the same aids, the same supports afforded to them, for ability to perform their duty, and attain their happiness.

The word of God, as the light of heaven, doth indifferently shine to all men, for instructing their minds, for directing their practice, for *guiding their feet in the way of peace.*

[f] Clem. Præd. i. 4.
[g] Psal. xlix. 2.
[h] Matt. vii. 21.
[i] Matt. xix. 17; vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24; Psal. xxxiv. 12; Rev. xxii. 14; Rom. ii. 7.
[j] John xv. 14.
[k] Luke xii. 48.
[l] Wisd. vi. 5, 6.

The divine grace is ever at hand, ready to assist all those who sincerely and seriously do apply themselves to serve God.

Seasonable comforts are never wanting to support those who need them, and who in their distress seek them from God, who *healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds;* so that when *the poor man crieth, the Lord heareth him, and saveth him out of his troubles.*[m]

The universal good Spirit of God (the fountain of light and wisdom, of spiritual power and strength, of consolation and joy) is communicated according to the needs of men, and exigencies of occasion;[n] preventing them by direction to the right way, by reclaiming them from ill courses, by exciting in them good thoughts and good desires; quickening their good resolutions, and assisting in the pursuit of them; enabling them to resist temptations, and to combat with their spiritual adversaries: to such best purposes the Holy Spirit is given to all in needful seasons and measures;[o] especially to those who do earnestly seek it, do faithfully use it, do treat it well.

3. God hath provided, and doth propose to all men the same encouragements for obedience, the same punishments for transgression; the which being the same in kind, do only differ in degree, proportionably to the good deeds or bad demerits of persons.

God hath appointed one heaven for all pious and virtuous persons, of what nation, of what rank, of what condition soever they are; he hath *prepared those things, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived, for all that love him.*[p] For *all* that have *fought the good fight*, and *kept the faith*, and *love his appearance, the Lord, the righteous Judge, hath laid up a crown of righteousness.*[q]

Immortality of life, an unfading crown of glory, a kingdom that cannot be shaken, unspeakable joys, endless bliss, God hath covenanted and promised to all his faithful servants;[r] to all who in his way please to accept and embrace them; ὁ θέλων, *He that willeth, let him take of the water of life freely.*[s] And what greater rewards could there be assigned? What room is there for partiality, where all are capable of the same equally great, because in a manner immense felicity? *Many* (saith our Saviour) *shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, and with Isaac, and with Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.*[t]

Lazarus, the poor beggar, shall rest with the illustrious Moses and the noble Daniel, with David, and Hezekiah, and Josiah, and all pious princes, in the bosom of Abraham. The poor fishermen, the painful tent-makers, the sorry publicans, shall reign together with Constantine and Theodosius, and all those good princes who have faithfully served God and promoted his glory. The rich, well using their wealth, may obtain that state, *treasuring up to themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life:*[u] the poor, contentedly bearing their condition, have a good title thereto, expressed in those words, *Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.*[v]

On the other hand, the same dismal punishments are threatened to all presumptuous, contumacious, and impenitent transgressors of God's law, however dignified or distinguished; be they princes or subjects, noble or base, wealthy or indigent; the same unquenchable fire, the same gnawing worm, the same weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; the same utter darkness; the same burning lake of brimstone; the same extreme disconsolate anguish is reserved for them all: *Depart from me; Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire*, will be the doom pronounced on *all the workers of iniquity: Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, will be upon every soul that doeth evil.*[w]

No regard will be had to the quality of men in this world; for *the rich man*, who *was clothed in purple and fine linen*,

[m] Psal. clxvii. 3; (cxlvi. 7;) xxxiv. 6.
[n] 1 Cor. xii. 7.
[o] Luke xi. 13.
[p] Col. iii. 11; 1 Cor. ii. 9.
[q] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
[r] Luke xxii. 29.
[s] Rev. xxii. 17.
[t] Matt. viii. 11; Luke xiii. 29.
[u] 1 Tim. vi. 19; Luke xii. 33; xvi. 9.
[v] Luke vi. 20.
[w] Matt. vii. 23; xxv. 41; Luke xiii. 27; Rom. ii. 8, 9.

and fared sumptuously every day, was not excused from *hell* and *torment*: there is a *Tophet ordained of old, even for kings; mighty men shall be mightily tormented*, if they have mightily sinned.[x]

Even present encouragements of virtue in this life, the joys and comforts of God's holy spirit, the sweet elapses of spiritual consolation in devotion, *the peace of God*, and delicious sense of his love, the cheerful satisfaction of a good conscience, the *joy in believing* God's truth, and hoping for accomplishment of his promises, the delight in obeying God's commandments, the blessing of God upon good undertakings, and happy success therein, the *co-operation of all things for good to them who love God*, the supply of all wants, and satisfaction of all desires, the experimental assurance of God's constant protection and gracious providence over those who fear him and trust in him (according to numberless declarations and promises in holy scripture), are indifferently dispensed to all who shall use the means to attain them, in way of conscientious practice.[y]

As, correspondently, the temporal discouragements from sin (crosses, disappointments, vexations, miseries) are without exception allotted to all transgressors of God's law, according to many denunciations therein.[z]

4. The impartiality of God doth appear from his universal providence, carefully watching over all and every person, dispensing good things to each, according to his need, without distinction.*

Is any man in extreme want? his liberal hand presently doth reach forth a supply; for, *He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness; He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.*[a]

Is any man in distress? the Lord is ready to afford relief; according to that repeated burden of the 107th Psalm: *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.*[b]

Is any man engaged in sin and guilt? he is patient and longsuffering; not pouring forth his anger, not withholding his mercies; letting his sun arise and his showers descend upon the most unworthy and ungrateful: this he doth so generally, that commonly by apparent events it is not easily discernible to whom God beareth special favour according to that observation of the Preacher, *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; all things coming alike to all.*[c] How then can any man complain of partiality in him, who exerciseth so unconfined bounty, clemency, and patience?

If there be any considerable difference, it is only this, that God hath a peculiar care of the poor, the afflicted, the oppressed, the helpless and disconsolate, who do most need (and thence are most induced to seek) his succour and comfort;[d] being also commonly better qualified to receive them; as is frequently declared in scripture.

It is true, that God hath his particular friends, his favourites, his privados, whom he doth specially regard and countenance; upon whom he conferreth extraordinary boons and graces; namely, those who do love, who do fear, who do trust in, who do honour him, who do obey him; concerning whom it is said, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God:* and, *The Lord preserveth all those that love him: There is no want to them that fear him: He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them: The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate: Them that honour me, I will honour: The Lord loveth the righteous: The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry: Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*[e]

* Bonus omnipotens ita curat universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos.—*Aug. Conf.*

[x] Luke xvi. 19, 23; James v. 1; Luke vi. 24; Isa. xxx. 33; Wisd. vi. 6.

[y] Psal. xxxvii. 4, 5; i. 3; Rom. viii. 28; Psal. cxlv. 19; xxxvii. 4; xxxiv. 10.

[z] Psal. xi. 6; lxxiii. 19; xxxii. 10; Isa. xlviii. 22; lvii. 20; liv. 17.

[a] Psal. cvii. 9; cxlv. 16.

[b] Psal. cvii. 6, 13, 19, 28; xxxiv. 6; cxlvi. 7; cxlvii. 6; ciii. 8; cvi. 8, 44; lxxviii. 38.

[c] Eccl. ix. 1, 2.

[d] Psal. cxlvi. 9; cxlvii. 14; ix. 9; xxxiv. 18; Isa. xxv. 4.

[e] Rom. viii. 28; Psal. cxlv. 20; xxxi. 23; xxxiv. 9; cxlv. 19; xxxiv. 22; 1 Sam. ii. 30; Psal. cxlvi. 8; xxxiv. 15; John xv. 14.

But evidently there is no partiality in this; for he doth not favour them irrespectively as persons, but as in justice specially qualified for favour; friendship, dutifulness, reverence toward him, being the highest virtues, and arguing a mind endued with dispositions (with equity, with ingenuity, with gratitude, with sober wisdom, with love of truth and goodness) which demand a correspondence of love and respect from God himself. And as we do not hold a man partial who beareth a special affection and regard to those who express good-will, who deal kindly and fairly with them who serve them faithfully and pay them due respect; so neither is God partial, if he doth specially bless good men upon the like accounts.

Especially considering, that God doth not so favour mere pretenders, who profess to love and honour him, but do not love true goodness; fond, superstitious, hypocritical people, who *call Lord, Lord*, but practice iniquity; who think to please him by affected services; who court and flatter him with their lips; who would bribe him with their gifts and sacrifices.[f]

5. All Christians, without distinction, have the same illustrious relations and honourable privileges, the most great and glorious that can be imagined.

Of what greater houour is a man capable, than to be adopted into the blood royal of heaven, *to be called* to be one of the sons of God? *Ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, that he might redeem us* — and *that we might receive the adoption of sons.*[g]

Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην· *Behold* (saith St. John) *what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God.*[h] This is a *privilege* which God hath given, which Christ hath purchased for us all. And *whosoever received him*, he gave *them ἐξοῦσιαν ταύτην*, (this power, this privilege, this advantage), *that they should become the sons of God.*[i]

To what higher dignity can any one pretend, than to be heir of a kingdom by the most infallible assurance that can be; by covenant, by promise of God? Such are all good Christians, God's children; for *if sons, then heirs*, (saith the apostle,) *heirs of God, coheirs with Christ:* heirs of God's kingdom; for, *Hearken, my beloved brethren*, (saith St. James;) *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?*[j]

Inherit the kingdom prepared for you.[k]

Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a kingdom.[l]

I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.[m]

To what higher pitch can the most ambitious soul aspire, than to be a king?

Such, St. John saith, that our Lord hath constituted every good Christian; *partakers*, not of a carnal, an earthly, a temporal kingdom, (which is unstable, is subject to various chances and crosses, cannot endure long, or last any considerable time,) but of a spiritual, a celestial, an eternal kingdom, *which cannot be shaken;* which hath continual rest, peace, joy.[n]

We are by God *called unto* his kingdom and glory—*translated into the kingdom of his own dear Son.*[o]

To be the brethren of Christ; who is the sovereign *Lord of glory, King of kings, and Lord of lords.*

Is it not a considerable honour to be the friends of our Lord? so is every poor soul which hath the conscience to serve him faithfully; for, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*[p]

All are citizens, free denizens of the heavenly commonwealth;[q] *συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων*——.

6. All men are liable to the same judgment, at the same tribunal, before that one impartial, inflexible Judge, who cannot be corrupted with gifts, or dazzled

[f] Matt. vii. 22; Luke vi. 46; Tit. i. 16; Matt. xv. 9; Col. ii. 22; Matt. xv. 8.

[g] (Col. iii. 11;) 1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 26, 28; iv. 4, 5; Rom. viii. 14.

[h] 1 John iii. 1; John i. 12.

[i] Gal. iv.

[j] Rom. viii. 17; Gal. iv. 7; Tit. iii. 7; Heb. i. 14; James ii. 5.

[k] Matt. xxv. 34.

[l] Luke xii. 32.

[m] Luke xxii. 29.

[n] Rev. i. 6, 9; v. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 18, *ἐπουράνιος*—2 Pet. i. 11, *αἰώνιος*—Heb. xii. 28, *ἀσάλευτος.*

[o] 1 Thess. ii. 12; Col. i. 13.

[p] John xv. 14.

[q] Phil. iii. 20; Heb. xiii. 20; xii. 22; Eph. ii. 19.

with shows, or moved by any sinister regards.[r]

All persons must stand before that bar upon equal ground; without any advantage; according to that representation of St. John: *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened—and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works:*[s]

The greatest monarchs, the mightiest potentates, the most redoubtable warriors, and successful conquerors (the *men who made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms*), *that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof;* who affected *to ascend into heaven, and to exalt his throne above the stars of God, to ascend above the heights of the clouds, and to be like the Most High.*[t]

There shall they stand, bare and divested of all their phantastry, their splendid pomp, their numerous retinue, their guards, their parasites.

No consideration there will be had of their windy titles, of their gay attire, and glittering pomp.

No respect will be had to the dread of their name, to the fame of their prowess; to that spurious glory, for which they unsettled mankind, and overturned the world; their actions will be strictly scanned according to the rules of God's law and common equity.

They will be put to answer for all the violences and outrages, for all the spoils and rapines, for all the blood and slaughters, for all the ruins, devastations, and desolations, their cruel ambition hath caused; for all the sins they have committed, and all the mischiefs they have done.

They who now have so many flatterers and adorers, will not then find one advocate to plead for them.

Thus it may appear that God is impartial.

But there are divers obvious exceptions against this doctrine. As,

Obj. 1. Is it not apparent that the gifts of God are distributed with great inequality?

Doth not one swim in wealth and plenty, while another coucheth under the burden of extreme want and penury?

Are not some perched aloft in high dignity, while others crawl upon the ground, and grovel in despicable meanness?

Are not some *clothed with purple and fine linen, and fare deliciously every day;* while others scarce find rags to cover them, and *lie at the door* begging for relief?[u]

Do not some thrive and prosper in their affairs, while others are disappointed and crossed in their undertakings?

Was it not truly observed of some persons (and those least deserving good fortune), *They are enclosed in their own fat —Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish?*[v]

And whence doth this difference come, but from God's hand? *Who* (as the apostle asketh) *maketh thee to differ*[w] from another, but God, the disposer of all things?

To this exception I answer—

1. That temporal things are so inconsiderable, that they scarce deserve to come into the balance, or to be computed;[x] for they have but the same proportion to spiritual things, as time hath to eternity;[y] or a finite to an infinite; which is none at all.

What partiality therefore is there, if God in mercy and patience bestow on bad men a farthing in the temporal *consolations* of this life (if the universal Father give a small *portion in this life* to untoward children), while he reserveth infinite millions for his obedient children?[z]

2. The goods of fortune commonly are dispensed not by a special hand of God, but according to the general course of providence: and what partiality is he guilty of, who scattereth money into a crowd of poor people; although in scrambling some get more than other; and often the worst (being most bold and fierce) do get most?

3. Indeed the receiving those gifts is

[r] Deut. x. 17; (Col. iii. 25.)
[s] Apoc. xx. 12.
[t] Isa. xiv. 16, 17, 8, 13, 14, 11.
[u] Luke xvi. 19, 20.
[v] Psal. xvii. 10; lxxiii. 7; Job xxi. 7; xii. 6; Jer. xii. 1; Hab. i. 16.
[w] 1 Cor. iv. 7.
[x] Rom. viii. 18, Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ ἀξία.—
[y] 2 Cor. iv. 17.
[z] Luke vi. 24; xvi. 25; Psal. xvii. 14.

no sign of God's special regard; as the Preacher well observed: *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them. All things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.*[a]

4. God, as St. Austin saith, purposely doth sparingly deal these things to good men, and freely bestoweth them on bad men, to show how little we ought to value them; how much inferior they are to spiritual goods. For surely he would give the best things to his friends, and the worst to his enemies.

5. Even temporal gifts are dispensed with a very even hand; for if, barring injudicious fancy and vulgar opinion, we rightly prize things, we compare the conveniences and inconveniences of each state, it will be hard to judge which hath the advantage.

Wealth hath more advantages for pleasure; but it hath also more cares, more fears, more crosses, more dangers, more troubles, more temptations.

It hath more plenty; but withal it hath less safety, less ease, less liberty, less quiet, less real enjoyment.

Set the distraction of the rich man's mind against the toil of the poorest man's body; the nauseous surfeits of one against the griping hunger of the other.

That which really doth constitute a state happy, content, may be common to both, or wanting to either, as the person is disposed.

6. The goods of fortune are not purely gifts, but talents deposited in trust for God's service, for which a proportionable return is expected; so that he that hath less of them hath a less burden to bear, and an easier account to render.

7. Many gifts are not dispensed with personal regard, but for public good; and therefore all have an interest in them.

The wealth, the power, the reputation, the prosperity, of a prince, of a nobleman, of a gentleman, are not his, but his neighbour's; for governing, for protecting, for encouraging, for assisting whom, they are conferred: the world not being able to subsist in order and peace without subordinate ranks, and without answerable means to maintain them.

[a] Eccles. ix. 1, 2.

Obj. 2. It is apparent that God dispenseth his grace, the light of knowledge, and means of salvation, very unequally; some nations living in the clear sunshine of the gospel, while others *sit in darkness and the shadow of death;*[b] whole nations being detained in barbarous and brutish ignorance.

To answer this exception fully would require much discourse; it being a dark and difficult point: but briefly we may say,

1. That God dispenseth measures of grace according to a just, yet inscrutable wisdom, knowing what use will be made thereof, and what *fruit* men will *bear*. It may therefore be a favour not to dispense light to them who are not prepared to embrace and improve it well.

2. No man can tell what God doth in preparation, and what obstructions are made by men to his grace.

3. As lower means of grace are conferred, so proportionably less returns are expected.

4. How hard soever it may be to descry the reason of God's proceedings in this case, yet assuredly it is just; and our ignorance of it should not prejudice the belief of those general truths, which are so plainly declared, concerning the universal benignity and impartial equity of God.

Obj. 3. Is it not in holy scripture sometimes asserted, that God doth act arbitrariously and absolute; dispensing his bounty and mercy without regard to any quality in men, or deed committed by them either in whole or in proportion—God saith, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*——and, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*[c]

Is not a plain instance of this dealing alleged by St. Paul concerning Jacob and Esau, that *before the children were born, or had done either good or evil*, God said, *the elder shall serve the younger;* and in regard thereto, in the prophet, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*[d]

We answer briefly, that

Such expressions do import, not that God acteth absolutely in the thing itself,

[b] Luke i. 79; Matt. iv. 16; Eph. iv. 18; ii. 1; Tit. iii. 3; 1 Pet. iv. 3.
[c] Rom. ix. 15; Matt xx. 15.
[d] Rom. ix. 11, 12, 13.

but *quoad nos;* not that he acteth without reason, but upon reasons (transcending our capacity, or our means to know it) incomprehensible or undiscernible to us;[e] not that he can give no account, but is not obliged to render any to us; that the methods of his providence commonly are inscrutable; that his proceedings are not subject to our examination and censure; that his acting doth sufficiently authorize and justify itself; that it is high presumption and arrogance for us to scan, sift, or contest, or cavil at the equity or wisdom of God's acting.[f]

That God doth not act according to necessity, but is free in dispensing his mercy, and applying it to any person, so that they have nothing to challenge upon account of their own deserts or works; but must refer all to his mere bounty.

However, there can be nothing in these mysteries of predestination and providence, which really doth subvert an assertion so often clearly expressed, and so well grounded in reason, or the consideration of God's nature, attributes, ordinary way of acting, &c.

Whatever expressions are repugnant thereto in sound, whatever instances (depending on occult causes) in appearance do cross it; yet it must stand, that God is impartially merciful, benign, just, &c.

Obj. 4. Had not Jeremy, St. John Baptist, St. Paul, absolute favours and graces conferred on them, who were *sanctified*, and separated from the womb to be prophets and apostles.[g]

Resp. These favours were in design not so much particular and personal, as general and public; those persons being raised up by God upon occasions as needful instruments (*elect vessels*) of his providence, to instruct men, and to reduce them to God;[h] so that God, in raising up such extraordinary persons, did express his common goodness to mankind.

The like may be said of that special favour which was vouchsafed to the holy Virgin, who was κεχαριτωμένη, and *blessed among women*,[i] for the general good of mankind.

The consideration of this point is very useful, and may dispose us to many sorts of good practice.

1. No man should presume upon God's dealing with him more favourably than with others, as if he were a darling or favourite; that God will indulge him in the commission of any thing prohibited, or in omission of any duty.

No man should indulge himself in any thing, upon a conceit that God will indulge him, or oversee his errors; and that, in this sense, *He seeth not iniquity in Jacob.*

2. No man should be puffed up with conceit that God hath a singular regard to him. For all such conceits are groundless and vain; in them men do miserably delude themselves.

No man can otherwise found any assurance of God's special love to him, than upon a good conscience; testifying that he doth sincerely love God, and endeavour faithfully to obey his commandments.[j]

3. No man should despair of God's favour; seeing God hath no particular aversation from any; but every person hath the same grounds of hope.

If we can buckle our hearts to observe our duty, we may be sure to be accepted.

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?[k]

4. No man should be discouraged for his condition, or fortune; since in allotting it to him, God had no disfavour, nor did intend him ill.

God hath no less regard to him, than to persons of the most high, wealthy, prosperous state.

5. No man should repine, murmur, or complain of God's dealing, as if he were unkindly used, more than others; for there is no such thing: God dealeth alike kindly with all.

6. No man, upon account of his rank, wealth, or worldly advantages, should boast or pride himself; seeing thence he partaketh no more than his meanest and poorest neighbour, of the principal advantage, God's favour.

7. No man, upon such accounts, should despise his neighbour, *the brother of low degree:*[l] for upon these accounts it ap-

[e] Rom. xi. 33.
[f] Rom. ix. 20.
[g] (Isa. xlix. 1, 5;) Jer. i. 5; Luke i. 15; Gal. i. 15.
[h] Jer. i. 10; Luke i. 16; Acts ix. 15; xxvi. 16.
[i] Χαῖρε κεχαριτωμένη, Luke i. 28.
[j] 1 John iii. 19, 21.
[k] Gen. iv. 7.
[l] James i. 9.

peareth that the Wise Man saith truly, that *he is void of wisdom who despiseth his neighbour;*[m] seeing no man can be despicable, whom God regardeth; seeing *God* (as Elihu saith) *is mighty, and despiseth not any;*[n] seeing the meanest person standeth on equal terms with the greatest in the eye of God.[o]

8. Great men should not take themselves for another sort of creatures, or another race of men, than their poor neighbours; that the world is theirs, and all things are for them; that they may do what they please; that they are exempted from laws which oblige others; for in moral and spiritual accounts they are upon a level with others.*

They are but fellow-subjects and fellow-servants with others; all accountable to the same Master.

9. Superiors hence should be moved to deal fairly, gently, and courteously with inferiors; seeing these are their fellow-servants, equally considerable as themselves with the great Master of the family.

This is the use to which St. Paul applieth the consideration:

Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye have a Master in heaven——Ye masters, do the same things unto them (that is, be conscientiously good to them, as they are faithful to you), *forbearing threatening; knowing that your master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.*[p]

10. This consideration should preserve us from superstition, or thanking to please or satisfy God, win his favour, or appease his displeasure, by uncouth ways, which he hath not prescribed to all men; to corrupt him by our sacrifices and oblations; our flatteries, glozings, colloguings with him; so that he will indulge us in any bad thing, or excuse us from our true duty, in regard to those affected services.

We do herein but abuse ourselves; for he will not approve or accept us upon any other account, than of discharging our duty, being truly righteous and good.[q]

11. It is matter of comfort and satisfaction to a man, who is conscious of his sincerity, that (whatever his condition and circumstances be) God will have a fair regard thereto, and will not reject him.

It was so to Job: *Doth not God see my ways, and count in all my steps?——Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know my integrity.*[r]

12. The consideration of this point should keep us from partial respects of men.[s]

Not to admire the state of great men, nor to yield them undue deferences (in prejudice to meaner persons, making greater difference than there is ground for), not to flatter or humour them in an immoderate measure, or unbeseeming manner.[t]

This is that which St. James doth urge in his second chapter, as a very unequal thing.

We should imitate God; we should consider that our opinions and affections should resemble his.

As in exterior judgment no respect is to be had to the rich above the poor; so neither in the interior judgment or esteem of our mind; to which St. James seemeth to apply the law; *If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.*[u]

13. This should keep us from envying at those who have more worldly advantages.

14. It should keep us from being offended, or scandalized, or perverted into false notions of God, upon occasion of any mysterious points, or hard expressions importing absolute and arbitrary proceedings of God, in predestination or providence. For however they are to be understood, they cannot derogate from the impartial goodness and justice of God.

15. This consideration should engage us readily to pay due respect and reverence to princes, to magistrates, to all our superiors.

For hence we see, that the reason

* Quorum fatis cœlum omne vacavit.—*Luc.* lib. vii.

[m] Prov. xi. 12; xiv. 21.

[n] Job xxxvi. 5. [o] (James ii. 6.)

[p] Col. iv. 1; iii. ult.; Eph. vi. 9.

[q] Coloss. ii; Mic. vi. 7, 8.

[r] Job xxxi. 4, 6.

[s] James ii. 1, 9; Prov. xxviii. 21.

[t] Οὐ μέλει σοι περὶ οὐδενός, Matt. xxii. 16; Θαυμάζειν πρόσωπα, Jude 16; Levit. xix. 15; Deut. i. 17; xvi. 19; Prov. xxiv. 23; xvi. 5; xxviii. 21. [u] James ii. 9.

why we are commanded to honour and fear them is, not their worldly grandeur of wealth or power (things of small considerations with God;) but it standeth on a more solid ground, their sacred relations to God, as his representatives and officers; who in his name and behalf do administer justice, and protect right and innocence, encourage virtue, maintain order and peace in the world.

Though God doth not favour their persons as rich and mighty; yet he regardeth his own character imprinted on them; he regardeth his honour and interest concerned in their respect; he regardeth the public good of mankind, which they are constituted to promote: he considers them as the *ministers of his kingdom*, and instruments of conveying his benefits to mankind.

Whence he *giveth salvation to kings;* he by his law, and by his providence, doth guard and secure them from violence, from contempt, from disrespect.

In honouring them, we honour the authority of God, and the character of divinity stamped on them; we serve ourselves, for whose sake they are constituted, for whose good they watch.[v]

It may also engage us the more gladly and fully to yield them their due respect, to consider, that their condition is not invidious, or their case better than other men's; seeing they are accountable to God for the advantages of it; seeing that God hath no regard to them upon account of that greatness which dazzleth our eyes; seeing that for all the burdens they sustain, for all the cares they take, for all the pains they endure, for our good and public service, they can receive so inconsiderable a recompense from us.

Finally, it should engage us to be very careful of our ways, and diligent in our obedience; seeing there is no other way possible of pleasing God, of gaining his favour and friendship, of appeasing his displeasure, of standing upright, and coming off well in his judgment; this is St. Peter's inference, with which I conclude.

If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.[w]

[v] Rom. xiv. 4; Εἰς ἀγαθόν. [w] 1 Pet. i. 17.

SERMON LXXI.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.—*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

There are two points of doctrine here plainly asserted by St. Paul, which I shall endeavour to explain and to apply: one, that God is the Saviour of all men; another, that he is peculiarly the Saviour of the faithful.* For the first,

God in many respects may truly be conceived and called *the Saviour of all men;* for the word *save* doth in a large acceptation denote the conferring any kind of good; as implying a removal of need, or indigence. Whence *God is the Saviour of all men*, as the universal preserver and upholder of all things in their being and natural state, as it is in the Psalm: *Thou, Lord, savest man and beast*, or, as the general benefactor, who *is good to all, and whose mercies are over all his works;* who *maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad, rains upon the just and unjust, is kind* and benign even *to the ungrateful and evil:*[a] or, as the common assistant, protector, and deliverer of all men, who in need or distress have recourse unto him for succour and relief, according to what is said in the Psalms: *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.*[b]

In these kinds of senses, especially respecting natural and temporal good, it is manifest that *God is the Saviour of all men.* But that he is in this place termed such in a higher sense, with regard to mercies and blessings of a more excellent kind, and greater consequence (to mercies and blessings of a spiritual na-

* Θεοῦ γὰρ πολλῶν ὄντων, ἐφ' οἷς θαυμάζεται, οὐδὲν οὕτως, ὡς τὸ πάντας εὐεργετεῖν ἰδιώτατον.—Naz. Orat. 26.

[a] Psal. xxxvi. 6; Old transl. and the LXX. σώσεις, or σώζεις,—Psal. cxlv. 9; Matt. v. 45; Luke vi. 35.

[b] Psal. ix. 9; cxlv. 18; cxlvi. 7, &c.; cvii. 13, &c.; lxviii. 19, 20.

ture, and relating to the eternal state of men), may from several considerations appear.

1. For that according to apostolical use the words *Saviour*, *Save*, *Salvation*, are wont to bear an evangelical sense, relating to the benefits by our Lord Jesus Christ procured, purchased, and dispensed, concerning the future state of men.

2. For that questionless St. Paul doth here intend God to be *Saviour* of the faithful in this higher sense, and consequently he means him in the same sense (although not in the same degree and measure, or not altogether to the same effects and purposes) a *Saviour of all men.*

3. Because it is plain, that in other places of scripture, like and parallel to this, such a sense is designed. As where, in this very Epistle, we are enjoined *to pray for all men*, for this reason: *For* (saith St. Paul) *this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge* (or acknowledgment) *of the truth*,[c] where σωτῆρ ἡμῶν, *the Saviour of us*, seems to denote the Saviour of *us* as *men* (that interpretation best suiting with the argument St. Paul useth), however it is expressed that God is, according to desire or intention, the Saviour of all men, in reference to their spiritual and eternal advantage; as willing that all men should embrace the gospel; which is further most evidently confirmed by the words immediately following: *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

4. Because, according to the tenor of scripture, and the analogy of Christian doctrine, St. Paul's assertion thus interpreted is true, as our subsequent Discourse may declare.

5. I might add, that *the living God* in our text may very well be understood and expounded to be our Lord Jesus himself;[d] not only as partaking of the divine nature, but as exhibited in the gospel, the Word incarnate, who as such may seem commonly by St. Paul to be styled, *God our Saviour; God manifested in the flesh; God that purchased the Church with his own blood; Christ, who is over all, God blessed for evermore.*[e] However, it from the premises is sufficiently apparent, that God's being *the Saviour of all men* doth relate unto our Saviour Jesus, his undertakings and performances for the salvation of all men; since God in a sense evangelical is no otherwise said to save, than in concurrence with what Jesus did undertake and perform; than as designing, ordering, accepting, prosecuting, and accomplishing our Lord's performances; Jesus being the conduit through which all evangelical mercies and blessings are from God conveyed and dispensed to mankind. So that God being *the Saviour of mankind*,[f] is either directly and immediately, or by equivalence and in consequence, the same with Jesus being *the Saviour of all men.*

That our Lord Jesus is *the Saviour of all men;* or that the most signal of his saving performances do in their nature and their design respect all men, as meant for, as conducing and tending to all men's salvation, yea and as in their own nature (supposing men's due and possible concurrence with them) effectually productive of their salvation; that, I say, this ancient catholic point of doctrine (the which we profess to believe, when with the church we say in the Nicene Creed—*Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven*, and the which particularly our church in its Catechism, in the Ministration of Baptism, and in the Communion, doth most evidently and expressly declare itself to embrace) is very true, many full and clear testimonies of scripture do shew, many reasons grounded on scripture do prove; the which we shall first touch, and then further both illustrate and enforce the truth, by declaring upon what accounts, or in what respects, our Lord is *the Saviour of all men;* as also by an application to practice, declarative of its usefulness and subserviency to the purposes of piety. For immediate testimonies:—

1. Jesus is called the *Saviour* of the world; who was sent and came into the world to save the world; whose chief

[c] 1 Tim. ii. 4.
[d] 1 Tim. i. 1; ii. 3; 2 Tim. i. 10.
[e] Tit. ii. 10, 13; iii. 4; i. 3; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Acts xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5.
[f] Eph. i. 3, 6.

performances were designed and directed to the salvation of the world: *We have heard and known* (said the men of Samaria) *that this is truly the Saviour of the world, the Christ. We have seen and testified* (saith St. John) *that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world* (that *world* of which it is said, *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*) And, *God sent his Son into the world, not to judge* (or *not to condemn*) *the world, but that the world by him should be saved* (that *world*, whereof a great part he in effect would both judge and condemn for unbelief and disobedience, he did come primarily upon intent to save.) And, *The bread which I shall give is* (saith he) *my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*[g] And, *Behold* (said the Baptist) *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.*[h] And, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their offences* (saith St. Paul) *to the world*, which otherwise he expresseth by τὰ πάντα, *by him to reconcile all things unto himself.* And, *He is a propitiation not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world* (*the whole world*,[i] in contradistinction from all Christians, to whom St. John speaketh in that place of his catholic Epistle; that κόσμος ὅλος, of which he saith in that same Epistle, that κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται, *the whole world lieth in wickedness.*[j]) In all which places, that the *world* according to its ordinary acceptation (and as every man would take it at first hearing) doth signify the whole community of mankind, comprehending men of all sorts and qualities, good and bad, believers and infidels (not in a new, unusual sense, any special restrained world of some persons, particularly regarded or qualified), will, I suppose, easily appear to him who shall without prejudice or partiality attend to the common use thereof in scripture, especially in St. John, who most frequently applieth it, as to this, so to other cases or matters.

[g] John iv, 42; 1 John iv. 14; John i. 10; iii. 17; xii. 47; v. 22; Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10; John vi. 51.
[h] John i. 29.
[i] 2 Cor. v. 19; Coloss. i. 20; 1 John ii. 2.
[j] 1 John v. 19.

2. The object of our Saviour's undertakings and intentions is described by qualities and circumstances agreeing unto all men. All the sons of Adam are by disobedience in a lost condition (lost in error and sin, lost in guilt and condemnation, lost in trouble and misery;) and, *The Son of man* (saith he himself) *came to save*, τὸ ἀπολωλὸς, *that which was lost* (or whatever was lost.) *All men have sinned* (saith St. Paul) *and are fallen short of the glory of God;* and, *It is a faithful saying* (saith the same apostle), *and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. God commended his love to us, that we being yet sinners, Christ died for us.*[k] All men naturally are weak and wicked; are in a state of alienation and enmity toward God: and, *Even when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly: When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Christ once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous.* All men have souls and lives exposed to misery and ruin: and, *The Son of man* (so he assures us) *came not to destroy, but to save the souls* (or *lives*) *of men.*[l] Those propositions in form, respecting an indefinite object, are, according to vulgar use, equipollent to those wherein the object is expressed universally. However,

3. They are interpreted by others, expressed in terms as general and comprehensive as can be; such as these texts contain: *The living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful*[m] (of all men universally, not only of the faithful, though chiefly of them.) *God our Saviour would have all men to be saved; He is the mediator of God and men, who gave himself a ransom for all men; God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. The love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that if one died for all, then are all dead; and he died for all, that they who live may not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again. The saving grace of God hath appeared to all men* (or the grace of God, which is saving

[k] Matt. xviii. 11; Rom. iii. 23; 1 Tim. i. 15; Rom. v. 8; Ephes. ii. 1, &c.
[l] Rom. v. 6, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 18; Luke ix. 56.
[m] 1 Tim. iv. 10.

to all men, hath appeared, ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις.) *He tasted death* (ὑπὲρ παντὸς) *for every man. He is the true light, that enlightneth every man coming into the world.*[n] Which propositions do sufficiently determine the extent of our Saviour's saving performances.

4. Further yet, to exclude any limitation or diminution of these so general terms (at least to exclude any limitation in regard to all the members of the visible church, which are or have been incorporated thereinto), it is expressed, that our Saviour's undertakings did respect even those who (by their own default) might lose the benefit of them, and who in effect should not be saved. For, of those false teachers who introduced *pernicious heresies*, it is said, that *they denied the Lord who bought them.*[*][o] And St. Paul implies, that by scandalous example *a weak brother, for whom Christ died*, being induced to sin, might be *destroyed. And by thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?* And, *Do not* (saith he again) *by thy eating destroy him for whom Christ died.*[p] And the apostle to the Hebrews signifies concerning apostates, that they do *trample upon the Son of God, and pollute the blood of Christ, by which they are sanctified.*[q]

5. The supposition thereof is the ground of duty, and an aggravation of sin.

Thus doth the holy scripture, in terms very direct and express, declare this truth, indeed so clearly and fully, that scarce any other point of Christian doctrine can allege more ample or plain testimony of scripture for it; whence it is wonderful that any pretending reverence to scripture should dare (upon consequences of their own devising) to question it; and many reasons confirming the same may be deduced thence.

1. The impulsive cause which moved God to design the sending our Lord for to undertake what he did, is expressed to be philanthropy, or love to mankind:* *But* (saith St. Paul) *when the kindness and love of God our Saviour unto man appeared—according to his mercy he saved us. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. God hereby commends his love unto us, that we as yet being sinners, Christ died for us.*[r] It was not a particular fondness of affection (such whereof no particular ground can be assigned or imagined), but an universal (infinitely rich and abundant) goodness, mercy, and pity toward this eminent part of his creation, sunk into distress and lamentable wretchedness, which induced God to send his Son for the redemption of mankind.

2. God declares himself impartial (most particularly) in this case; that as all men in regard to him stand alike related, and are in the same condition, so he proceeds with indifferent affection, and upon the same terms with all. He is equally the Lord and Maker of all men; and all men are equally involved in guilt, and exposed to ruin; upon which grounds St. Paul inferreth, that as to God's regard of man's salvation, there in no difference between Jews and Greeks; and by parity of reason there can be none between any other sorts of persons, antecedently to God's merciful intentions. *There is* (saith he) *no respect of persons with God*[s] (as to preparing the capacities and means, to propounding the terms and conditions of salvation, for about these he discourses;) for, *Is he* (saith the apostle, assigning the reason of that assertion) *the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? No: There is no difference* (saith he) *of Jew and Greek, for there is the same Lord of all, being rich* (rich in mercy and bounty) *unto all that call upon him;*[t] that is, by consequence, simply unto all; for St. Paul implies, that God therefore provided that all men should have the means of calling upon him imparted to them; for that, *how should they call upon him without faith?* and *how should they believe without preachers?* and *how should there be preachers, if they were not sent?* Whence he infers (against the sense of

* Væ illis, qui auctorem propriæ salutis negaverunt.—*Ambr. Ps.* xxxix.

[n] 1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, 6; Rom. xi. 32; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Tit. ii. 11; Heb. ii. 9, 10; John i. 9.

[o] 2 Pet. ii. 1.

[p] 1 Cor. viii. 11; Rom. xiv. 15.

[q] Heb. x. 29.

* Greg. Naz. saith of Julian, διὰ τοῦτο μισήσας Χριστὸν, ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ σέσωσται.—Athan. Orat. 32.

[r] Tit. iii. 4, Ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ.—John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8; Ephes. ii. 4.

[s] Rom. ii. 11. [t] Rom. iii. 29; x. 12.

those Jews with whom he disputes) that it was necessary that the apostles should have a commission to preach unto all. And, *The righteousness of God by the faith of Christ is manifested unto all, and over all that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:*[u] the relation of God is the same to all men (*He is the God and Lord of all;*) the state and need of all men are the same; there is therefore no difference, excepting that consequent one, which compliance or noncompliance with the conditions offered unto all doth induce. It is true in this respect, what the Wise Man saith, ὁ πάντων δεσπότης ὁμοίως προνοεῖ περὶ πάντων· *He* (that is Lord of all) *careth* (or provideth) *for all alike:*[v] and what Clemens Alexandrinus says, as to this particular, *All things lie equally for all from God; so that no man can complain of him;** as partial to some, and deficient to others.

3. We may observe, that the undertakings and performances of *our Lord* are for nature and extent compared with those of Adam (who was τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος, *a type of him that was to come;*[w]) as Adam, being a representative of mankind, did by his transgression involve all men in guilt, and subject them to condemnation; provoked God's wrath, and drew the effects thereof upon us; brought all men under the slavery of sin, and necessity of death; so was *our Lord* the *proxy* of mankind, and by his performances in our behalf did undo for our advantage what the former did to our prejudice; by his entire obedience expiating the common guilt, suspending the fatal sentence, pacifying God's wrath, reducing righteousness, and restoring life to all that would embrace them; so doth St. Paul at large (in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans) propound and prosecute the comparison; closing his discourse thus: *Therefore as by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.*[x] As guilt, wrath, and death forementioned, were the fruits of what Adam did, falling upon all; so pardon, grace, and life, were (in design) the effects of what *our Saviour* performed relating unto all. Yea, the same comparison St. Paul seems to intimate in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, where he saith, that *if one died for all, then are all men dead;*[y] that is, Christ's dying for all men implies all men in a state of condemnation and subjection to death; and that inference supposes the performances of the *first* and *second* Adam to be in their nature and primary effects coextended and commensurate. The same St. Paul seemeth in express terms to say, *All men have sinned, and are fallen short* (or *are destitute*) *of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace* (or *favour*) *by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*[z] (All men are justified, that is, according to God's favourable intention and design.) Yea, the very reason why God permitted sin and death to prevail so universally is estimated to be his design of extending a capacity of righteousness and life unto all; so St. Paul tells us: *God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all.*[a] And particularly, that by virtue of Christ's performances death is abolished, and immortality is conferred upon all men, St. Paul most expressly teacheth us; *For* (saith he) *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.*[b]

I observe that Prosper (an eager disputant about points allied to this) several times confesseth, that Christ may be most rightly affirmed to have been crucified for the redemption of the whole world, especially upon two accounts, for his true susception of human nature, and for the common perdition of all men in the first man:* we have touched the latter; let us add, that

4. Our Saviour assuming our nature, and partaking of our flesh, *being made in the likeness of men and founded in fashion as a man;*[c] yea endued with the

* Πᾶσι πάντα ἴσα κεῖται παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐστὶν αὐτὸς ἀμεμφής.—Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. p. 301.

[u] Rom. iii. 22, 23.
[v] Wisd. vi. 7.
[w] Rom. v. 14.
[x] Rom. v. 18.

* Cum itaque rectissime dicatur Salvator pro totius mundi redemptione crucifixus, propter veram naturæ humanæ susceptionem, et propter communem in primo homine omnium perditionem, &c.—*Prosp. ad Gal.* c. 9.

[y] 2 Cor. v. 14.
[z] Rom. iii. 23, 24.
[a] Rom. xi. 32.
[b] 1 Cor. xv. 22; 2 Tim. i. 10; Rom. vi. 23.
[c] Phil. ii. 7; Heb. iv. 15; ii. 17; v. 2; Gal. iv. 4.

passions and infirmities of man's nature, exposed to the tribulations and inconveniences of man's life, did thereby ally himself, and put on a fraternal relation unto all men. *Forasmuch* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *as children*[d] (the children he means of the same father, or brethren; as the tenor of his discourse makes evident) are *partakers of flesh and blood he also himself likewise took part of the same;* that is, graciously designing to become a brother to the children of men, he assumed all that was proper to man's nature. *God* (saith St. Paul) made *πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, the whole nation or race of men, dwelling upon the face of the earth, of one blood;*[e] and of that one blood our Saviour was pleased to take part, entitling us thereby to a consanguinity with him;* and it was a title of his, which he seemed to affect and delight in, *the Son of man.*[f] He being such did sanctify our nature, by the closest conjunction thereof to the divine nature, and rendering it more than a temple of the Divinity;[g] he dignified it, and (as that apostle intimateth) advanced it above the angelical nature by an alliance to God himself;[h] he thereby not only became qualified to mediate between God and man, and capable to transact that great business of man's salvation: but was engaged, and in a manner obliged to do it; for as he was a man, he surely was endued with the best of human affections, universal charity and compassion, which would excite him to promote the welfare of all; as he was *a man*, he was subject to the common law of humanity, which obliges to endeavour the common benefit of men. As he was *a brother* in relation, so he could not, he would not, be otherwise in affection; he is not to be conceived deficient in performance of the offices suitable to that condition. That good-will which he requires us to bear toward all men indifferently, good and bad, friends and enemies, he questionless did bear himself in the highest degree, and to the utmost extent:[i] the general beneficence, which in his conversation and practice he did express, doth signify how large his desires and intentions were in regard to the welfare of men; so that we may thence well aver with St. Ambrose: *Incarnationis Dei mysterium est universæ salus creaturæ; The mystery of God's incarnation doth respect the salvation of all mankind,*[j] according to his desire and design.

5. We are taught that *our Lord*[k] hath by his *saving* performances acquired a rightful propriety in, and a title of dominion over all men living;* to him is committed the governance and protection of all mankind, as the reward of what he did and suffered for his sake. *He is* called *the Lord of all men;* and *the head of every man.* It is said that *all things by his Father are given into his hand,* and *put under his feet;* that *power is given him over all flesh;* that *all authority is given him in heaven and earth; all judgment is committed to him.*[l] Which privileges, rights, dignities, are declared to have been procured by the virtue of his saving performances, and purchased by the price of his blood. *For to this end* (saith St. Paul) *Christ both died and rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*[m] (or might exercise lordship over both the dead and living, *ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ;*) and, *We are not our own* (saith he again;) *we are bought with a price:*[n] and, *We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man*[o] (or for the suffering of death, that by God's grace he might taste death for every man, crowned with glory and honour; for there seems to be such a trajection in the words:) and, *He was obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross; therefore hath God exalted him, and given him a name above every name.*[p] Sub-

* Ἡ πρόσληψις τῆς σαρκὸς οὐκ ἐδούλου τὸν λόγον φύσει Κύριον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν ἡ γινομένη παρὰ τοῦ λόγου πάσης ἀνθρωπότητος, &c.—Athan. c. Arr. Orat. iii. p. 385.

[d] Heb. ii. 14, 11, 12, 16.
[e] Acts xvii. 26.
[f] Heb. ii. 11,
[g] Heb. ii. 7, 16.
[h] 1 Tim. ii. 5.
[i] Matt. v. 44; Gal. vi. 10; Acts x. 38.

* Ἄνθρωπον αὐτὸν ποιήσας ὁ Πατὴρ οὐχ ἁπλῶς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ κυριεύσαι πάντων, αὐτὸν, καὶ ἁγιάζειν πάντας διὰ τοῦ χρίσματος πεποίηκεν.—Ath. Orat. 3. in Arr. 385.

[j] Ambr. de Parad. 8.
[k] Rev. xvii. 14.
[l] Acts x. 36; 1 Cor. xi. 3; Matt. xxviii. 18; xi. 27; John iii. 35; xiii. 3; Heb. ii. 8; i. 2; John xvii. 2; v. 22; Phil. ii. 9; Psal. cx. 7.
[m] Rom. xiv. 9.
[n] 1 Cor. vi. 20.
[o] Heb. ii. 9,
[p] Phil. ii. 8, 9; Rev. v. 9, 12.

jection, then, and redemption, as they have one ground, so they are implied to have the same extent: as every one must call Christ *Lord*, so he may call him *Saviour;* therefore his *Lord*, because his *Saviour*. And since Christ hath got an authority over all men, a propriety in every man; since he hath undertaken to govern and protect the world, he questionless, as a prince of incomparable benignity and clemency, doth seriously intend and desire the best welfare of all his people; it surely cannot be a small benefit to the community of men, that they are his subjects; the objects of his princely care, and of his mercy.——*Κήδεται τῶν συμπάντων, ὅπερ καὶ καθήκει καὶ κυρίῳ πάντων γενόμένῳ· σωτὴρ γὰρ ἐστιν, οὐχὶ τῶν μὲν, τῶν δ' οὔ. He taketh care of all, which doth become him that is Lord of all; for that he is indifferently the Saviour of all*, saith Clem. Alexand.[q]

6. We are commanded to *pray*, *intercede*, and *give thanks* (indifferently) *for all men*, even for heathens and persecutors; as for the objects of God's benevolent affection; whom he would have to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth;[r] expressing our charity in conformity to the unconfined goodness of God. Very good reason (argues St. Chrysostom) there is why we should pray for all men; for if God doth will the salvation of all men, we, in imitation of him, should will the same; and, if we desire it, we should pray for it.* Upon which score the catholic church hath constantly and carefully observed this precept; so the learned writer *de Vocatione Gentium* assures us: *Which law of supplication* (saith he) *the devotion of all priests and of all the faithful people doth so observe, that there is no part of the world, in which such prayers are not solemnized by the Christian people. The church of God doth therefore supplicate, not only for the saints, and the regenerate in Christ, but also for all infidels, and enemies of the cross of Christ; for all idolaters, all persecutors, all Jews, heretics, and schismatics.*† And Prosper himself: *Setting aside* (saith he) *that distinction, which the divine knowledge contains within the secret of his justice, it is most sincerely to be believed and professed, that God wills that all men shall be saved; since the apostle, whose sentence that is, doth most solicitously enjoin that which is in all the churches most piously observed, that God should be implored for all men.** So doth he attest the common practice, and declare the ground thereof.

7. For which practice, and, for the confirmation of its ground (God's serious willingness and desire that men should be saved), we have the pattern of our *Lord* himself praying to his *Father* for the pardon of the worst of men, his murderers; which as it demonstrated his charity toward them, so it argues that he was their *Saviour*, for that otherwise he knew they could not be in any capacity of having pardon. His praying for them implies the possibility of their receiving forgiveness; and such a possibility doth presuppose a disposition in God to grant it, and consequently a satisfaction provided, such as God requires and accepts, and which shall avail to their benefit, if toward the application thereof they perform their parts.

8. Indeed it is not easy to conceive, how we can heartily pray for pardon, or for any other blessing, either for ourselves or for others, without supposing Christ to be *our* Saviour and *theirs;* without supposing God placable and well affected towards us and them in Christ, upon the account of his performances and sufferings in our and their behalf. We are to offer up all our devotions in the name of Christ, and for his sake must implore all mercies and blessings from God; which how can we do seriously

* Μιμοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ——εἰ πάντας θέλει σωθῆναι, εἰκότως ὑπὲρ πάντων δεῖ εὔχεσθαι· εἰ πάντας αὐτὸς ἐθελήσει σωθῆναι, θέλε καὶ σύ· εἰ δὲ θέλεις, εὔχου.—Chrysost.

† Quam legem supplicationis ita omnium sacerdotum, et omnium fidelium devotio, concorditer tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit, in qua hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur a populis Christianis. Supplicat ergo ubique ecclesia Dei non solum pro sanctis et in Christo jam regeneratis, sed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, et inimicis crucis Christi, &c.

* Remota ergo discretione, quam divina scientia intra secretum justitiæ suæ continet, sincerissime credendum atque profitendum est Deum velle, ut omnes homines salvi fiant; siquidem apostolus, cujus ista sententia est, solicitissime præcipit quod in omnibus ecclesiis piissime custoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus suppliceretur.—*Pros. ad Obj. Vincent.* 2.

[q] Clem. Strom. vii. p. 505.

[r] 1 Tim. ii. 1, 4.

and with faith, if we may reasonably question whether Christ's merits do respect, us and consequently whether they can be available in our behalf? *I will* (saith St. Paul) *that men should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands, without wrath or doubting*:[s] which precept how can any man observe; how can any man pray with calmness and confidence of mind, who is not assured that Christ is his Saviour, or that God for Christ's sake is disposed to grant his requests? But this point we may be obliged to prosecute somewhat further in the application.

9. Either our Saviour's performances do respect all men, or some men (the far greatest part of men) do stand upon no other terms than those of the first creation, or rather of the subsequent lapse and condemnation; being subject to an extremely rigorous law, and an infallibly certain guilt, and consequently to inevitable punishment; being utterly secluded from all capacity of mercy, and having no place of repentance left unto them (the place of repentance being a most signal part of Christ's purchase;[t]) so that if any such man should, according to the proportion of his light and ability, perform what is agreeable to God's law, doing what is possible to him (this may be supposed, for what is possible to a man he may do, what is possible is possible) in order to his salvation, he notwithstanding should be incapable of any mercy, favour, or acceptance. But, beside that it is expressly said, that *God* did *shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all*;[u] and that we are plainly enough informed that our Lord did reverse the first fatal sentence, and hath, as the mediator between God and man, evacuated all former covenants by establishing a new one (for if any former covenant had been good, there had been no place sought for a new one,[v] as the apostle to the Hebrews discourseth) —besides these considerations, I say, and beside that such suppositions do not well suit to the nature of God, and do not well consist with the tenor of his providence; God positively and vehemently disclaimeth this rigour of proceeding;[w] he both under law and gospel declares himself ready to admit any man's repentance; yea, earnestly invites all men thereto; yea, grievously explains and expostulates with men for not repenting;[x] yea, not only says it, but swears it by his own life, that he desires any wicked man should do it; he strongly asserts, he earnestly inculcates, he loudly proclaims to all his readiness to pardon, and his delight in showing mercy;[y] the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long suffering. He declares that he will exact an account of men, according to proportion, answerble to their willingness to do what they could;[z] and to the improvements of those talents (those measures of light and strength) which they had, or might have had; that whoever is ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς, faithful in using the smallest power, shall be accepted and rewarded. He represents himself impartial in his judgment and acceptance of men's persons and performances;[a] any man, in any nation, his sincere, though imperfect, piety and righteousness being acceptable to him; the final ruin of men is not imputed to any antecedent defect lying in man's state, or God's will, to no obstacle on God's part, nor incapacity on the part of man, but wholly to man's blameable neglect, or wilful abuse of the means conducible to his salvation: no want of mercy in God, or virtue in the passion of our Lord, are to be mentioned or thought of; infidelity (formal or interpretative) and obstinate impenitency, disappointing God's merciful intentions, and frustrating our Lord's saving performances and endeavours, are the sole banes of mankind: *Here* (saith our Lord) *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* And, *I speak these things, that ye might be saved; but ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* And, *How often have I willed to gather thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!*[b] Of

[s] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[t] Acts v. 31; Luke xxiv. 47.
[u] Rom. xi. 32.
[v] Heb. viii. 7.
[w] Acts xvii. 30.
[x] Ezek. xviii.
[y] Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Isa. lv. 3, 7; Mic. vii. 8; Rom. ii. 4.
[z] 2 Cor. viii. 12; Matt. xxv. 25; Luke xix. 17; xvi. 10.
[a] Acts x. 34; 1 Pet. i. 17.
[b] John iii. 19; v. 34, 40; Matt. xxiii. 37.

the Pharisees and lawyers our Saviour said, that *they defeated the counsel of God toward themselves*,[c] (ἠθέτησαν τὴν βουλὴν Θεοῦ εἰς ἑαυτοὺς), the counsel of God, who designed to bring them to repentance by the instruction and exhortation of St. John the Baptist. Our Saviour invited many to the participation of the gospel (*that great feast of fat things to all people*,[d] as the prophet Isaiah calleth it;) but they would not come, saith the text: he iterated his message, but they carelessly neglecting it (ἀμελήσαντες) *went away, one to his farm, another to his merchandise, and the rest took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.*[e] The *sower* (our *Lord*) did sow in the *field* (*the world*)[f] the good seed of heavenly truth; but some would not admit it into their heads or hearts; from others temptation bare it away: in others worldly cares and desires choked it; our Lord spake the most convincing words, such as no man ever spake, such as drew *publicans* and *harlots* into the kingdom of heaven; he performed most astonishing works, such as never the like were done, which were sufficient to convert Tyre and Sidon, yea to have preserved Sodom, but without effect; such were the invincible obstinacy, the gross stupidity, the corrupt prejudices, and perverse affections of his auditors and spectators, upon which causes our Lord chargeth the inefficacy and unsuccessfulness of his endeavours for their salvation.[g] So doth St. Stephen call the Jews, unto whom the gospel was offered, *hard-necked, uncircumcised in heart and ears;* such as *did always resist the Holy Spirit.*[h] St. Paul gives the same character of them, and assigns the same cause of their rejecting the gospel. And of the Jews of Antioch it is said, that they did *thrust away the word of salvation, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life*[i] (that is, disdaining to embrace the overture of everlasting life made unto them. And, *Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and longsuffering; being ignorant that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*[j] So St. Paul expostulates with the incredulous Jew. And, *How* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation!*[k] So doth our Lord and his apostles state the reason of men's miscarrying in this great affair; signifying all requisite care and provision to be made on God's part for their salvation; and imputing the obstruction solely to their voluntary default of compliance with God in his conduct and management thereof.

Neither are the dealings and declarations of God toward those who lived under the laws and prophets impertinent to this purpose; they are applicable upon consideration of parity in reason, or likeness in case.

What remonstrances concerning the gentleness, kindness, and equity of his dealings, what exprobrations of their stubbornness and stupidity, God did anciently make to Israel under that particular dispensation (which yet in tendency and in representation may be deemed general), the same he might now use toward all mankind, under this *universal economy*, wherein God hath given to his *Son, the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession;* whereby *all the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and his Christ;*[l] which hath erected an unconfined kingdom of grace; to which all men in design and of right are subject; in respect to which every nation is in obligation and duty become the people of God. *What* (said *God* to them) *could I have done more to my vineyard than I have done? Wherefore, when I looked for grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help. I have spread out my hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainsaying people. I spake unto you rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; I called, but ye answered not; I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. When I*

[c] Luke vii. 30. [d] Isa. xxv. 6.
[e] Matt. xxii. 3, 5. [f] Matt. xiii. 37, 38.
[g] John vii. 46; xv. 22, 24; ix. 32; Matt. xxi. 31; John vii. 31; v. 44; xii. 43; Luke xvi. 14; Matt. xiii. 13; xxiii. 14.
[h] Acts vii. 51; xxviii. 26.
[i] Acts xiii. 46.
[j] Rom. ii. 4. [k] Heb. ii. 3.
[l] Psal. ii. 8; Rev. xi. 15.

called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. And, *Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear; yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit.*[m] Which passages, with many others of the like importance that occur, do imply the large extent of God's merciful intentions, and the competency of the means which God affords for the salvation of men; that he wants no affection or inclination to save them; that he neglects no means proper for effecting it; that he draws them into the way leading thither by serious and earnest invitation, directs them by needful light and instruction, excites them by powerful arguments and persuasions; and, as St. Ambrose speaketh, *Quon in Deo fuit, ostendit omnibus, quod omnes voluit liberare: God showed to all, that what was in him, he did well to deliver* (or save) *all men.*[n] Whence he may truly and properly be called the Benefactor and Saviour, even of those who by their wilful malice or neglect do not obtain salvation.* For in respect to the same favours, which are exhibited and tendered to them, he is the Saviour of those who, by hearkening to God's call, and complying with God's design; by well using the means vouchsafed, and performing the conditions required, do finally attain salvation.

If it be said that these transactions do refer only to God's own people, or to those only unto whom God pleased to dispense especial revelations of truth and overtures of mercy; that we therefore cannot thence infer any thing concerning the general extent of God's design, or the virtue of Christ's performances in respect to all mankind; we may to this suggestion rejoin, that by observing the manner of God's proceedings towards them, unto whom he openly declareth his mind and will, we may reasonably collect how he standeth affected toward others, and by what rules, or upon what accounts, he dealeth with them; taking in the analogy of reason, and parity or disparity of the case. As to God's affection, it is the same every where, agreeable to that nature, which inclineth him to be *good to all, and merciful over all his creatures,*[o] as the Psalmist tells us; unto which disposition his providence yields attestation; for *οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον, ἀφῆκεν ἑαυτὸν, ἀγαθοποιῶν, he did not leave himself without testimony, doing good to all,*[p] as St. Paul tells us; although he doth not dispense his favours in the same method, or discover his meaning by the same light, or call all men to him with the same voice and language.

Neither was mankind ever left destitute of that *divine grace*, which, as the good writer *de Vocatione Gentium* saith, *never denied itself to any ages, with the same virtue, to different measure, with an unchangeable counsel, and multiform operation.** So in one place; and in another, *There was always* (saith he) *dispensed to all men a certain measure of instruction from above, which, although it came from a more occult and sparing grace, did yet suffice to some for remedy, to all for testimony.*†

Comparing the different states of men, we may substitute with St. Paul,‡ for the *law of revelation* engraved upon *tables*, the *law of nature* written in men's *hearts;* for *prophetical instruction*, the *dictates of reason;* for *audible* admonitions and reproofs, *secret* whispers of grace and checks of conscience; for *extraordinary* instances of divine power, the *ordinary*

* —— *ἀπαλογούμενος μετὰ ἀποδείξεως ὅτι πάντα τὰ εἰς αὐτὸν ἥκοντα ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν κρινομένων πεποίηκεν*——.Bas. in Ps. vii.

[m] Isa. v. 4; Hos. xiii. 9; Isa. lxv. 2; Rom. x. 21; Jer. vii. 13; Prov. i. 24, 29; Isa. lxv. 12; lxvi. 4; Ezek. xii. 2; Jer. vi. 10; Zech. vii. 11, 12.

[n] De Parad. 8.

* Gratia Dei nullis seculis se nagavit, virtute una, quantitate diversa, concilio incommutabili, opere multiformi. ii. 5.

† Adhibita est semper universis hominibus quædam supernæ mensura doctrinæ, quæ etsi occultioris parciorisque gratiæ fuit, suffecit tamen quibusdam ad remedium, omnibus ad testimonium. ii. 15.

‡ Rom. ii. 14, 15.—Nulli nationi hominum bonitatis suæ dona subtraxit, ut propheticas voces et præcepta legalia convincerentur in elementorum obsequiis, et testimoniis accepisse.—*De Voc. G.* i. 5; Rom. i. 19.

[o] Psal. cxlv. 9.

[p] Acts xiv. 17.

works of the creation (*by which God's eternal divinity and power are discernible;*[q]) for the *special* and occasional influences of providence, the *common* and continual expressions of divine beneficence; then allowing for the disparity (as to measure of evidence and efficacy) in these things; and as to the rest, the case is the same. If one part hath means more clear and forcible, yet those which are granted to the other are not void of use or virtue; by them all men in all places *may seek God, if haply they may feel him and find him;*[r] yea may, as St. Paul implieth, be able to know God, and induced to serve him;[s] to thank him, and to glorify him in some measure; in a measure answerable to such light and strength; no more doth God require, for no more will he reckon with him. If their helps be deemed more low and scanty, their duty in proportion is less high, and their account will be more easy. Enough certainly they have to excuse God from misprision of not having provided competently for them, to render them, if they do not well use and improve it, inexcusable;[t] and what they have is an effect of God's mercy procured and purchased by their Saviour. But of this point we may have occasion afterward to say more; I shall now only add, that this suggestion, well considered, may afford another argument to comfirm our doctrine; which is this.

10. If *our Lord* be the *Saviour* of all those to whom God's truth is declared, and his mercy offered; or, if he be the *Saviour* of all the members of the visible church; particularly if he be the *Saviour* of those who, among these, rejecting the overtures and means of grace, or by disobedience abusing them, shall in the event fail of being saved, then is he the *Saviour* of all men. But *our Lord* is the *Saviour* of those persons; and therefore he is *the Saviour of all men.* The *assumption* we assayed to show in the last argument; and many express testimonies of scripture before mentioned establish it; the common style of scripture doth imply it, when in the apostolical writings to all the visibly faithful indifferently, the relation to Christ as their Saviour is assigned, an interest in all his saving performances is supposed, the titles of σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι (with others equivalent, of *justified*, *sanctified*, *regenerated*, *quickened*, &c.) are attributed. And in our text, God is said to be *the Saviour* chiefly τῶν πιστῶν, *of the faithful;* which word in its common acception denotes all visible members of the Christian communion. And for its confirmation we adjoin; the apostles at first, and the church ever since after them (except some heterodox people of late) have professed readily to confer holy baptism, and therein to dispense remission of sins, together with other evangelical graces and privileges, to every man professing his faith in Christ, and resolution to observe Christ's law, upon this supposition, that Christ is the *Saviour* of all such persons, and by his salutary passion hath purchased that remission for them; although the dispensers of these graces could not discern what decrees God in his secret providence had passed upon them, or what the event should be as to their final state; yea, although according to the judgment of prudence they could not but conceive, that all such should not be saved, but that many of them should be of those, who (as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) would *draw back into perdition*, who (as St. Peter implies some might and would do) would forget the purgation which they had received of their sins.[u] That in thus doing the church proceeds upon a persuasion that Christ is truly the Saviour of all its visible members, duly admitted and incorporated thereinto, the thing itself plainly signifies; the tenor of its practice makes palpable; the forms of speech used in its holy administrations (of prayers, of sacraments, of exhortations) do suppose or express. For how can each member singly be asserted in holy baptism to be washed from his sins, and sanctified to God, and made regenerate, or adopted into the number of God's children, and made partaker of Christ's death? How can thanksgiving in the common name, in most general terms, be offered up for Christ's saving performances? or the holy bread and

[q] Acts xiv. 17. [r] Acts xvii. 27.
[s] Rom. i. 18, 20; ii. 15, 26; i. 21.
[t] Rom. i. 20.

[u] Heb. x. 39; 2 Pet. i. 9.

cup be imparted to each comunicant as symbols and pledges of Christ's charity and mercy toward him? How can every Christian be instigated to obedience in gratitude to Christ; and those who transgress Christ's laws, upbraided for their ingratitude toward him; their rejecting, or renouncing, despising, or abusing him and his salvation? How can such things be said and done with any truth or consistency; yea without forgery and mockery, if every baptized Christian hath not an interest in our Lord's performances? if Christ be the Saviour only of an uncertain and unknown part in the church? This consideration of the church's practice hath made even the most vehement assertors of St. Austin's doctrine (strained to the highest pitch), in the more ancient and modest times fully to acknowledge this position; that Christ is the Redeemer of every member of the visible church, as appears by this remarkable decree of the council of Valentia in France (consisting of the bishops of three provinces, favourers of Godscalcus's opinions:[v]) *We also do believe it most firmly to be held, that all the multitude of the faithful, being regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, and hereby truly incorporated into the church, and according to the apostolical doctrine baptized into the death of Christ, is by his blood washed from their sins.** Because there could be no true regeneration, unless there were made also a true redemption; since in the sacraments of the church there is nothing empty (or vain,) nothing ludificatory; but all thoroughly true, and supported by its own very truth and sincerity. Yet that out of the very company of believers and the redeemed, some are eternally saved, because by God's grace they faithfully abide in their redemption, bearing the Lord's speech in their hearts, *He that perseveres to the end shall be saved;* and that others, because they would not abide in the salvation of the faith which they at first received, and did rather choose to frustrate the grace of redemption by evil doctrine or life, than to keep it, do nowise arrive to the plenitude of salvation, and to the perception of eternal beatitude. It is then a catholic and true doctrine, that at least Christ is a Saviour of all appearing Christians; and supposing the truth thereof, I say that by consequence he is also the Saviour of all men. For it appeareth thence, that the design of our Saviour's performances did not flow from, or was not grounded upon any special love, or any absolute degree concerning those persons who in event shall be saved; since according to that supposition it extendeth to any others; wherefore it proceeded from God's natural goodness, and common kind affection toward mankind; from the compassion of a gracious Creator toward his miserable creature, whence all men are concerned and interested therein. Why God's merciful intentions were nor explicitly declared and propounded to Socrates and Epictetus, as they were to Judas Iscariot and Simon Magus, is another question, which we may afterward in some manner assoil; at present, it suffices to say, that the overture of mercy made to such wretches doth argue God's kind disposition and good intention toward all men; so it did in St. Ambrose's opinion; who says, that our Lord ought not to pass by the man who should betray him, that all men might take notice, that in the choice even of his traitor he did hold forth a pledge or mark of all men's being to be saved.*

But the truth of this doctrine will further appear by the declaration and surveyal of those respects according to which Christ is represented the Saviour of men, as also by considering how useful and conducible to piety this doctrine is, as ministering grounds and obligations, encouragements and motives, to the practice of most considerable duties required from all men. But these things must be reserved to another occasion.

* Item firmissime tenendum credimus, &c. supr.

[v] Anno 855.

* Et ideo nec proditurum debuit præterire, ut adverterent omnes, quod in electione etiam proditoris sui servandorum omnium insigne prætendit. *Ambr. de Parad.* 8.

SERMON LXXII.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

THAT our Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men, we have before, from plain testimonies of holy scripture, and from some arguments grounded there, essayed to show. The same will be made further apparent by considering the respects according to which he is such; and those we may first consider generally and in the gross, then survey them more particularly and distinctly.

In general we may say, that our Lord is *the Saviour of all men*, for that he hath rendered all men *salvabiles*, capable of salvation; and *salvandos*, designed to salvation. For that he hath removed all obstacles peremptorily debarring men from access to salvation, and hath procured competent furtherances to their attainment of it. For that he hath rescued mankind out of that dead and desperate condition, wherein it lay involved; being *the bread of God*, who *hath descended from heaven, that he might give life to the world*,[a] as he saith of himself. For that he hath performed whatever on his part is necessary or fit in order to salvation, antecedently to the acceptance and compliance with those reasonable conditions, which by God's wisdom are required toward the instating men into a full and immediate right to salvation, or to a complete and actual fruition thereof. He made the way to happiness plain and passable;[b] levelling the insuperable cliffs, and filling up the chasms, and rectifying the obliquities, and smoothing the asperities thereof, as the prophet foretold; so that all men, who would, might conveniently walk therein. He set the doors of paradise wide open, so that who pleased might enter in;*[c] all the bonds and restraints under which men lay, he so far loosed, that any man might be free, who would concur to his own liberty and enlargement. All the protection, aid, and encouragement which was needful toward obtaining salvation, he afforded and exhibited to every one that would embrace and make use of them. In respect to which performances, he might be justly esteemed and truly called a *Saviour*, although all men do not in effect become saved. For the estimation and denomination of performance, are to be grounded upon their own nature and design, not upon events depending upon the contingent and arbitrary behaviour of men. As he that freely offers a rich boon is no less to be accounted a benefactor and liberal, although his gift be refused, than if it were accepted; as he that opens the prison is to be styled a deliverer, although the captive will not go forth; as he that ministers an effectual remedy, although the patient will not use it, deserves the honour and thanks due to a physician; so is *our Lord* in regard to what he hath performed for men, and offered to them (being sufficient to prevent their misery, and promote their happiness), to be worthily deemed, and thankfully acknowledged, their *Saviour*, although not all men, yea although not one man, should receive the designed benefit. Accordingly we may observe, that in the scripture-style, those persons are said to be saved who are only in a way toward salvation, although they do not arrive thither; and the means conducing to salvation are said to save, although their effect may be defeated; σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι are terms applied to all Christians, and Christ is ὁ σώσας, *he that hath saved them*;[d] and *faith* is said to have *saved them*, although some of them εἰκῇ ἐπίστευσαν, have *believed in vain*, or to no effect, forsaking and renouncing their faith;[e] and *baptism* saves them who partake it, although being washed, they return to their wallowing in the mire. And as our Lord is so termed a *Saviour* in respect to them who are, by faith and admission into the church, put into a more near capacity of salvation, as St. Paul speaketh: ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν (*Now is our salvation near-*

* Ἡ γῆ ἀντὶ κατάρας εὐλόγηται, ὁ παράδεισος ἠμοίγη, &c.—Athan. in pass.

[a] John vi. 33. [b] Luke iii. 5.

[c] Luke iv. 18. Αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν—.

[d] Acts xvi. 17, Καταγγέλλουσιν ὁδὸν σωτηρίας. —1 Cor. i. 18; Acts ii. 47; Rev. xxi. 24; Eph. ii. 5; 2 Tim. i. 9.

[e] 1 Cor. xv. 2; Tit. iii. 8; 1 Pet. iii. 21; 2 Pet. ii. 22.

er than when we believed;) so is he in respect of all those who are in any capacity thereof, although a more remote one.

But let us now view more nearly and distinctly the respects in which he is *a Saviour of all men*, or the particular benefits and advantages conducing to salvation, which by his performances accrue to mankind; for πάμπολυ τὴν σωτηρίαν ἁπάσῃ χαρίζεται τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι,[g] *in very many ways he bestoweth salvation upon all mankind*, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks.

1. Our Lord is *the Saviour of all men*, as having effected that Almighty God (who upon great provocations was justly displeased and angry with man, who had averted his face, and withdrawn his favour from mankind, whom our apostasy and rebellion had rendered a stranger and an enemy to us) hath deposed his wrath toward mankind, hath conceived a kind affection to it, doth cast a favourable aspect upon it; being thoroughly reconciled and made a friend thereto by our Saviour's mediation. *This is my beloved Son*, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, *in whom I have been well pleased*,[h] was the attestation given from God to our Lord; the meaning whereof in regard to men the holy choir of angels did interpret, when after the gladsome report of his birth (that *great joy, which should be to all people*), they sang *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will toward men.*[i] Which St. Paul further declareth, when he saith, that by him εὐδόκησε, God pleased to reconcile unto himself all things, upon earth, and in heaven;[j] and when he saith, *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins.*[k] And, *When we were enemies*, saith he again, *we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; When we were enemies*,[l] that implies God antecedently to any man's conversion to have been appeased, and become favourably disposed toward all men, or toward those whom St. Paul speaketh unto, as men; so the reason of the case doth import, and so the analogy which St. Paul immediately after propounds between the results of Adam's transgression and our Saviour's obedience (as to provocation and reconciliation, to condemnation and absolution, to the intents of bringing death and life upon all men) doth enforce. Whence it is, that God declareth himself now to bear an universal good-will to mankind, that he doth earnestly desire the welfare of all men, and is displeased with the ruin of any man; that he *would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*, because *there is one Mediator between God and man; that he would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance;*[m] this he affirms, yea (for the confirmation of our faith and our consolation therein) he in the evangelical prophet swears it, *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.*[n] So far toward our salvation is done; God meets us half way: he is reconciled unto us; it remains only that we be reconciled to him; that we hearken to the embassy from him, *Be reconciled to God.*[o]

2. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*, by satisfying the divine justice, and repairing God's honour in their behalf. The disloyal and ingrateful behaviour of man had so wronged, so endamaged, so dishonoured God (had so abused the goodness, disparaged the wisdom, slighted the power, impeached and slurred the authority of his Creator, had so prejudiced all the rights and interests of God), that by the divine wisdom it was thought fit that he should not be restored into a capacity of mercy and favour, without a signal compensation made, and an exemplary punishment undergone, whereby the right of God should conspicuously be asserted, his love of goodness and dislike of wickedness should be remarkably demonstrated,* and every creature in heaven and earth should be solemnly admonished of its duty; of the reverence and obedience it owes to the great Creator, of the heinous guilt and horrible mischief it incurs by offending him. Such a compensation man was nowise able to make,

[g] Rom. xiii. 11. Clem. Alex. Pædag. 11.
[h] Matt. iii. 17; xii. 18.
[i] Luke ii. 10, 14. [j] Col. i. 20; Eph. i. 10.
[k] 2 Cor. v. 19. [l] Rom. v. 10.

* Λοιπὸν δὲ οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὐκέτι κατὰ τὰ ἴδια πάθη μένουσιν, ἁμαρτωλοὶ καὶ νεκροί. ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ λόγου δύναμιν ἀναστάντες ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἄφθαρτοι ἀεὶ διαμένουσιν.—Athan. in Arian. Orat. iv. 485.

[m] 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 9; Heb. vi. 16, 18.
[n] Ezek. xxxiii. 11. [o] 2 Cor. v. 20.

or fit to undergo such a punishment: our Saviour therefore, out of infinite pity and charity, did undertake both;*[p] by a voluntary condescension putting himself into the low and weak state of man; subjecting himself unto that law which man was obliged unto, and suffering the pains which man deserved. This he was pleased to do in man's behalf, and in our stead; and God was pleased to accept it as so done. His incarnation (or exinanition of himself, as St. Paul calleth it) was an act of that high duty and goodness, that it in virtue surpassed all the obedience which all creatures were able to render; that it yielded God more satisfaction and more honour than the joint endeavours of all the world could confer.† His with so intense charity and cheerfulness fulfilling all righteousness did far more please God than all our most exact obedience could have done;‡ his enduring bitter pains and disgraces (considering the infinite dignity of his person, his near relation and dearness to God, his perfect innocence and rectitude, yea his immense charity, contentedness, and patience) more than countervailed the punishment due to the sins of all men. Such a payment was more than served to discharge all our debts (it served to purchase an *overplus* of graces and blessings;) so rich a price was more than sufficient to ransom all the world from captivity; so goodly, so pure, so sweet, so precious a sacrifice might worthily expiate and atone all the guilts of men.[q]

Now if we inquire what our Saviour did redeem, the consideration of what he paid may, as St. Austin tells,|| help to inform us: *Quæritis quid emerit? Videte quid dederit, et invenite quid emerit.*[r] *Do ye seek* (saith he) *what he bought? See what he gave, and find what he bought.* However, that as the value and sufficiency of our Lord's performances, so the design and effect thereof did reach so far in regard to man; that his charity was no less extensive than his performance was complete, for our good, the holy scripture teaches us. For, *He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*, saith the Baptist. And, *The bread* (saith he) *which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* And, *He is a propitiation* (saith St. John) *for our sins: and not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.* And, *He is the Mediator of God and man, who gave himself* (ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων) *a ransom*, in the stead, and *for all men*, saith St. Paul. And, *He tasted death for every one*, saith the author to the Hebrews.[s] And, He was *that one Man*, who, as it was *expedient*, did *die for the whole nation* of men. And, *God was in him, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their sins.*[t] And, *He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might by him be saved* (or freed from condemnation.) And, *As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, mercy came upon all to justification of life.*[u] The end we see of our Saviour's performances was, that he might *wipe* off the guilt of sin from all mankind,* that he might reverse the condemnation passed thereupon, and that he might remove the punishment due thereto; or that, absolving the first man's sin, he might take it away from the whole race, as St. Athanasius speaks.

All men have sinned, and come short (or are destitute) *of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He was born under the law, that he might redeem those which were under the law. He that knew no sin was made sin* (was punished and dealt with as a sinner), *that we might be made the righteousness of*

* Τότε γὰρ καὶ θάνατος, καὶ κατάρα ἐλύετο, καὶ δαίμονες κατησχύνοντο καὶ ἐδειγματίζοντο θριαμβευόμενοι, καὶ τὸ χειρόγραφον τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τῷ σταυρῷ προσηλοῦτο, &c.—Chrys. in Johan. i. 14.

† Ἡ ἔνσαρκος παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος θανάτου λύτρον καὶ κτίσεως πάσης σωτηρία γέγονεν.—Athan. ad Adelph. Ep.

‡ *Vide* Cyrill. ia Eph. Conc. p. 133, Δικαιώσῃ τὴν ἀνθρώπου φύσιν, &c.

|| Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμος ὅλος ἐλυτρώθη· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ψιλὸς, ἀλλ' υἱὸς Θεοῦ μονογενὴς, ὁ ὑπεραποθνήσκων, &c.—Cyrill. Cat. 13.

[p] Phil. ii. 7.

[q] Eph. v. 2; Heb. x. 10; ix. 12; 1 Pet. i. 19.

[r] Aug. in Psal. xcv.

* Ἵνα ἐκείνου λύων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ παντὸς αὐτὴν ἄρῃ τοῦ γένους.—Athan. in pass.

[s] John i. 29; vi. 51; 1 John ii. 2; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. ii. 9.

[t] John xi. 50; xviii. 14; iii. 17; 2 Cor. v. 19.

[u] John iii. 17; Rom. v. 18.

God in him (that we might be capable of being esteemed and dealt with as righteous by God upon his account.[v]) So that the result is, divine justice being fully satisfied, and the honour of God fully repaired (in regard to all sins past and future), the mouth of vengeance being stopped, the claims of death and hell being evacuated, that general sentence of condemnation (passed upon all the sons of Adam) is suspended, death ceases to reign by any just power, or inevitable necessity; (it is, as St. Paul saith, abolished or abrogated as to any lawful right, or necessary force it hath;[w]) the rigour and severity of that law, which upon pain of death exacteth most punctual obedience (and which consequently doth expose all men to unavoidable condemnation), is tempered and abated, a foundation is laid for the showing mercy and granting pardon. In respect whereto,

3. Our Lord is *the Saviour of all men*, as having in the behalf of mankind transacted and ratified a new covenant, very necessary for, and very conducible to, the salvation of mankind; whereby salvation is made attainable, and is really tendered unto all, upon feasible and equal conditions. According to the purport whereof upon any man (however stained or loaded with the guilt of most heinous transgressions) his embracing the overtures thereof, consenting to, and complying with the terms propounded therein, that is, sincerely believing, and seriously repenting; returning to God with hearty desires and earnest resolutions to serve him; God is ready to dispense mercy and pardon, and immediately receiveth the person into grace and favour with him: yea, the man continuing to perform a faithful, though imperfect obedience, an obedience suitable to man's natural infirmity and frailty, and proportionable to the assistances afforded him; God further promiseth to bestow inestimable blessings and rewards of joy and happiness. That covenant which the prophets implied of old, when (beside and beyond what the Jewish law did import) they preached thus: *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil—though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.* And, *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* And, *If the wicked man will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die*[x] (so God in Isaiah and Ezekiel declareth his intention to proceed with men, avowing that way of his to be most equal and fair.) This is that covenant which our Lord commanded his apostles to declare and propound to all mankind: *Go ye* (said he to them) *into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature;*[y] that gospel according to which, as it is expressed in St. Luke, *repentance and remission of sins ought to be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;*[z] in respect to which St. Peter says, that *God hath exalted* our Lord *to be a prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel, and remission of sins*[a] (*to grant repentance*, that is, as the apostle to the Hebrews and Clemens Romanus speak, μετανοίας τόπον, room for repentance, or capacity to receive pardon upon repentance;[b] concerning which covenant, that Clemens (the fellow-labourer of St. Paul, and whom Clemens Alexandrinus calleth an apostle), in that excellent, admirable, and almost canonical Epistle to the Corinthians, which, as Eusebius and Jerome tell us, was anciently publicly read in most churches,* hath these remarkably full and clear expressions: *Let us* (saith he) *look steadfastly upon the blood of Christ, and let us see how precious to God his blood is, which being shed for our salvation, did bring the grace of repentance to the whole world. Let us attentively regard all ages, and observe that in every generation the Lord granted place of repentance to them who would turn unto him.*†

[v] Rom. iii. 23, 24; Gal. iii. 13; iv. 5; 2 Cor. v. 21.

[w] 2 Tim. i. 10; Gal. iii. 10, 12; Rom. x. 5.

* Ἐν πλείσταις ἐκκλησίαις.—Euseb.

† Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἴδωμεν ὅσον τίμιον τῷ Θεῷ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν

[x] Isa. i. 16, 18; lv. 7; Ezek. xviii. 21.

[y] Mark xvi. 15.

[z] Luke xxiv. 47.

[a] Acts v. 31.

[b] Phil. iv. 3.

This is that *new* and *better covenant, established upon better promises* (cancelling all former, exceptionable, imperfect, and ineffectual compacts, referring to man's interest and duty), about which the apostle to the Hebrews discourseth, and whereof he calleth *our Lord* the *Mediator* and *Sponsor;* in regard to which St. Paul calleth him *the Mediator between God and man;*[c] plainly declaring all men to have a concernment and interest therein; for this supposition he useth as an argument proving God's universal desire of man's conversion and salvation: *Who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.**[d] By virtue of which covenant it is, that any such degrees of love or fear toward God, such as men are capable of, are available, any righteous performances, such as our weakness can produce, are acceptable, any honest endeavours do receive countenance and encouragement; and that, as St. Peter observed, *in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him;*[e] although his fear of God be not so intense or pure; his righteousness not so exact and unblameable, as, according to extremity of law and duty, they should be. From which covenant so far is any man, according to God's intention and desire, from being excluded, that all men are seriously invited, vehemently exhorted, earnestly entreated to enter into it, and to partake the benefits exhibited thereby. Every man who feeleth himself to want those benefits, and is desirous of mercy and ease from the guilt and burden of his sins, may come and welcome. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;*[f] so the evangelical prophet proclaims; and, *If any man thirsteth, let him come to me and drink,* crieth our Lord; and, *Come to me all yea that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*[g] (*Δεῦτε πάντες, Come all to me:* all men, therefore, saith Origen, who from the nature of sin do labour and are burdened, are called to that rest; which is with the Word of God*.) And, *In Christ's name* (saith St. Paul) *we are ambassadors, as though God by us entreateth: we pray you for Christ's sake be ye reconciled to God;*[h] the purport of which embassy, together with its extent, he otherwhere thus expresseth, *ταῦν παραγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι πανταχοῦ μετανοεῖν, He now proclaimeth to all men every where that they should repent;*[i] he consequently holds forth to all the benefits annexed to repentance. But of this we spake formerly.

4. Our Lord Jesus is *the Saviour of all men,* as having purchased and procured for them competent aids whereby they are enabled to perform the conditions required of them in order to their salvation; to acquire a sufficient knowledge of their duty, to subdue their bad inclinations and lusts, to withstand temptations; or briefly, whereby they are enabled sincerely to repent of their sins, and acceptably to perform their due obedience.[j] The truth of this point, taking in the consideration of man's natural state, may by good consequence be inferred from the truth of the points foregoing. If men are naturally so dead in trespasses and sins, so enslaved and sold under sin; so very prone to evil, and averse to good; so dark and blind, that they cannot well discern what they should do; so corrupt and weak, that they cannot perform what they know and confess to be good (as St. Paul affirmeth men to be), and consequently are of themselves indisposed to perform the duties acceptable to God,† and requisite by his appoint-

ραν σωτηρίαν ὑκχυθὲν, παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ὑπήνεγκεν. Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς γενεὰς πάσας καὶ καταμάθωμεν ὅτι ἐν γενεᾷ καὶ γενεᾷ μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐπιστραφῆναι ἐπ' αὐτόν.—Clem. ad Corinth.

* Quo dicto ostenditur nullum hominem secundum naturam esse pollutum, sed æqualiter omnes ad Christi Evangelium provocari.—*Hier. ad Aug. Epist.* 11.

[c] Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24; vii. 22; 2 Cor. iii. 6.

[d] 1 Tim. ii. 4, 5.

[e] Acts x. 35.

[f] Isa. lv. 1.

* Πάντες οὖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὴν τῆς ἁμαρτίας φύσιν κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι καλοῦνται ἐπὶ τὴν παρὰ τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀνάπαυσιν.—Orig. in Cels. 3.

† Si Deus non operatur in nobis, nullius possumus esse participes virtutis; sine hoc quippe bono nihil est bonum, sine hac luce nihil est

[g] John vii. 37; Matt. xi. 28.

[h] 2 Cor. v. 20.

[i] Acts xvii. 30.

[j] Eph. ii. 1; Col. ii. 13; Rom. vii. 14, 15; Eph. v. 8; 2 Cor. iv. 6; 2 Pet. i. 19, &c.—Ὁ ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσχρὰ δλισθος αὐτοφυοῦς ἀσθενείας ἔργον.—Max. Tyr. Diss. 22.

ment toward their salvation, then either our Lord hath provided for them a communication of grace sufficient to countervail or surmount that natural impotency, or all his designs for their good are imperfect or inconsistent (aiming at an end, without providing requisite means, or removing necessary obstructions), and his performances, whereby the forementioned benefits were procured, do prove ineffectual and fruitless. For God being appeased, and become well-affected to man's salvation, divine justice being satisfied, the rigour of law being mitigated, repentance being made available, and an obedience, agreeable to man's frailty, becoming acceptable, with all other the immediate results of our Saviour's transactions for man, would signify nothing in regard to him who still lieth under a necessity of sinning, or an inability of performing that which is indispensably exacted from him toward a complete enjoyment of those benefits and favours. In vain is the debt paid, and the bond cancelled, and the prison set open, and liberty proclaimed, and the prisoner called forth, if he be not himself able to knock off the fetters which detain him, and there is no help afforded, by which he may do it. But our Lord hath surely laid his designs more advisedly, and hath prosecuted his work more perfectly. Wherefore we may suppose that a competency of grace and spiritual assistance is by virtue of our Saviour's performances really imparted to every man, qualifying him to do what God requires, and is ready to accept from him, in order to his welfare; that our Saviour hath sent abroad his holy Spirit (that fountain of all true goodness, of all spiritual light, strength, and comfort), like the sun, to shine, to warm, to dispense benign influences over the world; although it shineth not so brightly and vigorously, and its presence is not so visible and sensible in one place as another; which Holy Spirit, as it is in its essence omnipresent, so it is likewise in its energy incessantly working (in reasonable measure, right manner, and fit season, as wisdom ordereth) upon the minds and affections of men, infusing good thoughts and motions, impressing arguments and motives to good practice, cherishing and promoting good purposes, checking bad designs, restraining and reclaiming from bad courses.* Our reason, however aided by exterior instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those mighty temptations, oppositions, and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerful spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. So that all deliverance from the prevalency of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistance. That to these purposes the Holy Spirit is plentifully conferred upon all the visible members of the Christian church, we have plainly declared in scripture;[k] it was a promise concerning the evangelical times, that God would pour forth his Spirit upon all flesh; the collatoin thereof is a main part of the evangelical convenant (into a participation of which every Christian is admitted), it being the finger of God, whereby God's law is impressed upon their inward parts, and engraven in their hearts (as the prophets describe the effects of this covenant.[l]) And the end of our Saviour's passion is by St. Paul declared to be, *that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith;*[m] that is, that becoming Christians we might partake thereof. And the apostolical ministry (that is, preaching the gospel, and dispensing the privileges thereof) is therefore styled, διακονία πνεύματος, *the ministry of the Spirit.* And the *tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking the Holy Ghost,*[n] is, according to the apostle to the Hebrews, part of the character of a visible Christian, (such a Christian, who might παραπεσεῖν, *fall away*, as he supposeth, and *recrucify the Lord, and expose him to shame:*[o]) and St. Peter makes reception of the Holy Ghost to be a concomitant or consequent of baptism; *Repent* (saith he) *and be baptized every one of*

lucidum, sine hac sapientia nihil sanum, sine hac justitia nihil rectum.—*De Voc. Gent.* i. 8.

* Τοῖς εὖ βιοῦν ἐκανηρημένοις ἰσχὺν πρὸς τὴν λοιπὴν σωτηρίαν ἐμπνεῖ.—Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. p. 523.

[k] Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17.

[l] Jer. xxxi. 33; Ezek. xi. 19; Heb. viii. 11; 2 Cor. iii. 3.

[m] Gal. iii. 14.

[n] 2 Cor. iii. 8; Heb. vi. 4, 5.

[o] 2 Thess. ii. 3.

you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise (or that promise of the Spirit, which is called *the Spirit of promise* peculiar to the gospel) *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call:*[p] (that is, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, how far distant soever in time or place, who shall be invited unto, and shall embrace Christianity;) and accordingly, St. Paul saith of Christians, that *God according to his mercy hath saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*[q] And, *Know ye not* (saith he to the Corinthians) *that ye are the temple of God; and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*[r] (that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common property and privilege of Christians such as ye profess yourselves to be?) And the union of all Christians into *one body* doth, according to St. Paul, result from this *one Spirit*, as a common soul imparted to them all, inanimating and actuating the whole body, and every member thereof.[s] For *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one Spirit.* And it hath been the doctrine constantly with general consent delivered in and by the catholic church, that to all persons, by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated into Christianity, and admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of the Holy Spirit is communicated, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue which they undertake; and continually watching over them for accomplishment of those purposes; which Spirit they are admonished not to resist, to abuse, to grieve, to quench;[t] but to use it well, and improve its grace to the working out their salvation. Thus much concerning the result of our Saviour's performances, in this kind, in respect to the community of Christians, we learn from the holy scripture and ecclesiastical tradition interpreting it; whence we may discern, that the communications of grace do not always flow from any special love or absolute decree concerning men, but do commonly proceed from the general kindness and mercy of God, by our Lord procured for mankind; and consequently we may thence collect, that somewhat of this nature is to the same purpose, from the same source, and upon the same account, also granted and dispensed to others. Unto Christians indeed this great benefit (for the reward, the encouragement, the support of their faith; and for promoting their obedience, who are in a nearer capacity and more immediate tendency to salvation) is in a more plentiful measure, and a more conspicuous manner dispensed; but that, besides that dispensation, there have been other (not so plainly signified, or expressly promised, yet really imparted) communications of grace, in virtue of our Saviour's merits, there are (beside the main reason alleged, inferring it from our Lord's being the Saviour of all men) divers good inducements to believe.[u] For even those Christians, to whom upon their faith the Holy Spirit is promised and bestowed, are by previous operations of God's grace (opening their minds, inclining their hearts, and tempering their affections) induced to embrace Christianity, faith itself being a gift of God, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit.[v] And before our Saviour's coming all good men have thereby been instructed and enabled to do well.* And before any special revelation made, or any particular covanant enacted (before the enclosure of a particular people or church, the confinement of God's extraordinary presence and providence to one place), divine grace appears diffused over several nations, being watchful in guiding and moving men to good, and withdrawing them from evil; neither is there reason why such an appropriation of special graces and blessings (upon special reasons) unto some should be conceived to limit or contract God's general favour, or to withdraw his ordinary graces from others. God surely (*who is πλούσιος ἐν ἐλέει,*

[p] Acts ii. 38, 39; Eph. i. 13.
[q] Tit. iii. 5.
[r] 1 Cor. iii. 16.
[s] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[t] Eph. iv. 30; 1 Cor. xii. 7; Phil. ii. 13.

* Ex quo perspicuum fit natura omnibus inesse Dei notitiam, nec quemquam sine Christo nasei, et non habere semina in se sapientiæ, justitiæ, reliquarumque virtutum. Unde multi absque fide, et evangelio Christi vel sapienter faciunt aliqua vel sancte, &c.—*Hier. in Galat.* i.

[u] Eph. ii. 8; Gal. v. 22; Luke xxiv. 45.
[v] Matt. xvi. 17; John xvi. 12; 1 Cor. xii. 3.

rich in mercy; yea, hath ὑπερβάλλοντα πλοῦτον χάριτος, *excessive riches of grace*[v]) is not so poor or parsimonious, that being liberal to some should render him sparing toward others;* his grace is not like the sea, which if it overflow upon one shore, must therefore retire from another; if it grow deep in one place, must become shallower in another. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?* it is a question in Micah; and, *Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?* is another question in Isaiah: *No; The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear;*[x] at any time, in any place, he is no less able, no less ready than he ever was, to afford help to his poor creatures wherever it is needful or opportune. As there was of old an Abimelech among the Philistines, whom God by special warning deterred from commission of sin; a divine Melchisedeck among the Canaanites;[y] a discreet and honest Jethro in Midian; a very religious and virtuous Job in Arabia;[z] who by complying with God's grace, did evidence the communication thereof in several nations; so it is not unreasonable to suppose the like cause now, although we cannot by like attestation certify concerning the particular effects thereof. We may at least discern and show very conspicuous footsteps of divine grace, working in part, and producing no despicable fruits of moral virtue (of justice and honesty, temperance and sobriety, benignity and bounty, courage and constancy in worthy enterprises, meekness, patience, modesty, prudence, and discretion, yea, of piety and devotion in some manner) even among pagans, which if we do not allow to have been in all respects so complete as to instate the persons endued with them or practisers of them, in God's favour, or to bring them to salvation;† yet those qualities and actions (in degree, or in matter at least, so good and so conformable to God's law), we can hardly deny to have been the gifts of God, and the effects of divine grace; they at least themselves acknowledged so much; for, *Nulla sine Deo mens bona est, Nomind is good without God*, said Seneca;* and, Θείᾳ μοίρᾳ φαίνεται παραγιγνομένη ἡ ἀρετή, οἷς παραγίνεται, *Virtue appears to proceed from a divine dispensation to them who partake of it*, said Socrates:† and, Αἱ ἄρισται φύσεις, ἀμφισβητήσιμοι ἐν μετρίῳ τῆς ἄκρας ἀρετῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐσχάτην μοχθηρίαν καθωρμισμέναι, δέονται ξυναγωνίστου Θεοῦ καὶ ξυλλήπτορος τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ θάτερα τὰ κρείττω ῥοπῆς καὶ χειραγωγίας. *The best natured souls being constituted in the middle, between the highest virtue and extreme wickedness, do need God to be their succourer and assistant in the inclining and leading them to the better side*, saith Max. Tyr. xxii. St. Austin himself, who seems the least favourable in his judgment concerning their actions and state, who calls their virtues but images and shadows of virtue (*non veras, sed verisimiles*), splendid sins; acknowledges those virtuous dispositions and deeds to be the gifts of God, to be laudable, to procure some reward, to avail so far, that they, because of them, shall receive a more tolerable and mild treatment from divine justice; which things considered, such persons do at least, by virtue of grace imparted to them,‡ obtain some part of salvation, or an imperfect kind of salvation, which they owe to our Lord, and in regard whereto he may be called in a sort their Saviour.

But although the torrent of natural pravity hath prevailed so far, as that we cannot assign or nominate any (among those who have lived out of the pale) who

* Secundum scripturam credimus et piissime confitemur, quod nunquam universitati hominum divinæ providentiæ cura defuerit. Quem licet exceptum sibi populum specialibus ad pietatem direxerit institutis, nulli tamen nationi hominum bonitatis suæ dona subtraxit, &c.—*De Vocat. Gent.* i. 5.

† Καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἐδικαίου ποτὲ καὶ ἡ φιλοσοφία τοὺς Ἕλληνας.—Clem. Alex.

Mortalem vitam honestare possunt; æternam conferre non possunt.—*Prosper in Collat.* cap. 26.

(Prodesse ad salutem.—*Aug. Prosper, Fulgent. &c.*)

Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit.—*Cic. de Nat. Deorum* ii. *sub fin.*

* Sen. Ep. 73.—Quæ secundum justitiæ regulam non solum vituperare non possumus, sed etiam merito recteque laudamus.—*Aug. de Spir. et Lit.* cap. 27.

† Plat. Menon. ad finem.

‡ Tolerabilius puniuntur. Minus Fabricius quam Catilina punietur, &c.—non veras virtutes habendo, sed a veris virtutibus non plurimum deviando.—*Aug.*

[v] Eph. ii. 4, 7.

[x] Mic. ii. 7; Isa. l. 2; lix. 1.

[y] Gen. xx. 3; xxvi. 8.

[z] Exod. xviii.

certainly or probably have obtained salvation, yet doth it not follow thence, that a sufficient grace was wanting to them. The most universal practice contrary to the intents of grace doth not evince a defect of grace. For we see that the same cause hath in a manner universally overborne and defeated other means and methods designed and dispensed by God for the instruction and emendation of mankind.

God's spirit did long strive with the inhabitants of the *old world*:[a] yet no more than one family was bettered or saved thereby. God by his good Spirit instructed the Israelites in the wilderness, as Nehemiah saith;[b] yet no more than two persons did get into Canaan: that people afterward had afforded to them great advantages of knowledge and excitements to piety (so that God intimates, that he could not have done more for them in that regard, than he had done. Yet, *There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God*, was a complaint in the best times.[c] The Pagans had the means of knowing God, as St. Paul affirmeth, yet generally they grew vain in their imaginations, and *their foolish heart was darkened*;[d] from which like cases and examples we may infer, that divine grace might be really imparted, although no effect correspondent to its main design were produced. Neither, because we cannot allege any evident instances of persons converted or saved by virtue of this grace (this *parcior occultiorque gratia*, *more sparing and secret grace*, as the good writer *de Vocatione Gentium* calls it), are we forced to grant there were none such; but as in Israel when Elias said, the children of Israel have *forsaken God's covenant, thrown down his altars, and slain his prophets with the sword; and I, I only am left*; there were yet *in Israel*, living closely, *seven thousand knees, who had not bowed to Baal*:[e] so among the generations of men, commonly overgrown with ignorance and impiety, there might, for all that we can know, be divers persons indiscernible to common view, who, by complying with the influences of God's grace, have obtained competently to know God, and to reverence him; sincerely to love goodness, and hate wickedness; with an honest heart to observe the laws of reason and righteousness, in such a manner and degree which God might accept; so that the grace afforded might not only *sufficere omnibus in testimonium* (*suffice to convince all men*), but *quibusdam in remedium* (*to correct and cure some*), as that writer *de Voc. Gent.* speaks. The consideration of God's nature and providence doth serve further to persuade the truth of this assertion. If God be *rich in mercy*[f] and bounty toward all his creatures, as such (and such he frequently asserts himself to be), if he be all present and all-provident, as he certainly is, how can we conceive him to stand as an unconcerned spectator of what men do in affairs of this consequence? That he should be present beholding men to run precipitantly into desperate mischiefs and miscarriages, without offering to stay or obstruct them; struggling with their vices and follies, without affording them any relief or furtherance; assaulted by strong temptations, without yielding any support or succour; panting after rest and ease, without vouchsafing some guidance and assistance toward the obtaining them? how can he see men invincibly erring and inevitably sinning, without making good what the Psalmist says of him: *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way*;[g] to withhold his grace in such cases seemeth inconsistent with the kind and compassionate nature of God, especially such as now it stands, being reconciled to mankind by the *Mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus*. He also, that is so bountiful and indulgent toward all men in regard to their bodies and temporal state; *who preserveth their life from destruction*,[h] who protecteth them continually from danger and mischief; *who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing; who satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*; who, as St. Paul speaketh, *filleth men's hearts with food and gladness*;[i] is it likely that he should altogether neglect their spiritual welfare, and leave their souls utterly

[a] Gen. vi. 3; 1 Pet. iii. 20.
[b] Neh. ix. 20.
[c] Isa. v. 4; Psal. xiv.
[d] Rom. i. 21.
[e] 1 Kings xix. 14, 18.
[f] Psal. cxlv. 9.
[g] Psal. xxv. 8.
[h] Psal. ciii. 4.
[i] Psal. cxlv. 16; cvii. 9; Acts xiv. 17.

destitute of all sustenance or comfort; that he should suffer them to lie fatally exposed to eternal death and ruin, without offering any means of redress or recovery? To conceive so of God seemed very unreasonable even to a pagan philosopher: *Do you think* (saith Max. Tyrius[j]) *that divination, poetry, and such like things, are by divine inspiration insinuated into men's souls, and that virtue* (so much better, and so much rarer a thing) *is the work of moral art? You have forsooth a worthy conceit of God, who take him to be liberal in bestowing mean things, and sparing of better things.** *He that* (as St. Paul saith) *giveth to all men life, breath, and all things,*[k] will he withhold from any that best of gifts, and most worthy of him to give, that grace whereby he may be able to serve him, to praise him, to glorify him, yea, to please and gratify him; to save a creature and subject of his; the thing wherein he so much delighteth? From hence also, that God hath vouchsafed general testimonies of his goodness, inducements to seek him, footsteps whereby he may be discovered and known, a light of reason and law of nature written upon men's hearts;[l] attended with satisfactions, and checks of conscience; so many dispositions to knowledge and obedience, as St. Paul teacheth us; we may collect that he is not deficient in communicating interior assistances, promoting the good use and improvement of those talents; for that otherwise the bestowing them is frustraneous and useless; being able to produce no good effect; yea, it rather is an argument of unkindness, being apt only to produce an ill effect in those upon whom it is conferred; an aggravation of sin, an accumulation of guilt and wrath upon them.

If it be said, that having such grace is inconsistent with the want of an explicit knowledge of Christ, and of faith in him; why may not we say, that as probably (so St. Chrysostom, *vid. Mont. App.* I.) most good people before our Lord's coming received grace without any such knowledge or faith; that as to idiots and infants, our Saviour's meritorious performances are applied (in a manner unknowable by us) without so much as a capacity to know or believe any thing; that so we (to whom God's judgments are inscrutable, and his ways uninvestigable) know not how grace may be communicated unto, and Christ's merits may avail for other ignorant persons?[m] in respect to whom we may apply that of St. John; *The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.*[n] However, that such persons may have a grace capacifying them to arrive to that knowledge and faith to which fuller communications of grace are promised; so that in reasonable esteem (as we shall presently show) the revelation of evangelical truth, and the gift of faith may be supposed to be conferred upon all men—so that we may apply to them that in the Revelation; *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him, and he with me*[o] (that is, Behold, I allure every man to the knowledge and embracing of Christianity; if any man will open his mind and heart, so as to comply with my solicitations, I am ready to bestow upon him the participation of evangelical mercies and blessings:) and to such persons those promises and rules in the gospel may appertain: *He that asketh receiveth; he that seeketh findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened: The heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. He that is* ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς (*faithful in the use of the least grace*) shall be rewarded. And, *To him that hath* (or that diligently keepeth and husbandeth what he hath) *shall more be given.*[p]

And how God sometimes dealeth with such persons, the eminent instances of St. Paul and Cornelius do show. But concerning this point I spake somewhat before, and have perhaps been too large now; I shall only add that saying of the wise writer *de Voc. Gent. A pious mind* (saith he) *should not, I think, be troubled at that question which is made concerning the conversion of all, or not all men; if*

* Ἡ πολλοῦ ἄξιον νομίζεις τὸ θεῖον πρὸς μὲν τὰ φαῦλα καλῶς καὶ ἀφθόνως παρεσκευασμένον, πρὸς δὲ τὰ κρείττω ἄπορον.

[j] Max. Tyr. Diss. 22. [k] Acts xvii. 25.

[l] Acts xiv. 17; xvii. 27; Rom. i. 19; ii. 15.

[m] Rom. xi. 33. [n] John i. 5.

[o] Rev. iii. 20.—Εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε, οὐκ ἂν εἴχετε ἁμαρτίαν, John ix. 41, 15; xv. 22.

[p] Luke xi. 10, 13; xix. 17, 26.

*we will not obscure those things which are clear, by those things which are secret; and while we wantonly insist upon things shut up, we be not excluded from those which are open and plain.** Which in effect is the same with this; that since we are plainly taught that our Lord is the Saviour of all men; and it is consequent thence, that he hath procured grace sufficiently capacifying all men to obtain salvation; we need not perplex the business or obscure so apparent a truth, by debating how that grace is imparted; or by labouring overmuch in reconciling the dispensation thereof with other dispensations of Providence.

SERMON LXXIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 TIM. iv. 10.——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

5. JESUS is *the Saviour of all men*, as the conductor of all men into and through the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave captains who by their wisdom and valour have freed their country from straits and oppressions. So were those judges and princes who anciently delivered Israel from their enemies commonly styled: *In the time of their trouble* (say the Levites in Nehemiah) *when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and, according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy;*[a] so are Othniel and Ehud particularly called; and Moses signally;[b] *The same* (saith St. Stephen of him) *did God send to be ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτὴν, a Commander and a Saviour* (or Redeemer) *to the children of Israel;* for that he by a worthy and happy conduct did free them from the Egyptian slavery. And thus was Demetrius by the Athenians (for his delivering them from the Macedonian subjection, and restoring their liberty to them) entitled εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτῆρ, *a benefactor and saviour.* Thus with greatest reason is Jesus so called, as besng ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of salvation*[c] (so he is called by the apostle to the Hebrews), ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, (*the Captain of life*,[d] as St. Peter names him, the Chief Leader unto eternal life), ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως (*the Captain of our faith;*[e] he that hath revealed that saving doctrine which is the power of God to Salvation:[f]) and these titles we have conjoined by St. Peter in the Acts: *Him hath God exalted,* ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, *as a Captain and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.*[g] This he is to us several ways, by direction both instructive and exemplary; by his protection and governance; by his mating and quelling the enemies of man's salvation; which things more specially and completely he hath performed in respect to faithful Christians, yet in a manner also he hath truly done them for and toward all men; as we shall distinctly consider.

6. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*, we say, as having perfectly discovered and demonstrated the way and means of salvation; the gracious purposes of God concerning it; the duties required by God in order to it; the great helps and encouragements to seek it; the mighty determents from neglecting it; the whole will of God, and concernment of man in relation thereto; briefly, all saving truths he hath revealed unto all men: *mysteries* of truth, which *were hidden from ages and generations*,[h] which no fancy of man could invent, no understanding could reach, no reason could by discussion clear (concerning the nature, providence, will, and purpose of God; the nature, original, and state of man; concerning the laws and rules of practice, the helps thereto, the rewards thereof, whatever is important for us to know in order to happiness), he did plainly discover, and bring to light; he did with valid sorts of demonstration assert and confirm. The

* Puto quod pius sensus non debeat in ea quæstione turbari, quæ de omnium et non omnium hominum conversione generatur; si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obscuremus, et dum procaciter insistimus clausis excludamur ab apertis, &c.—*Lib.* i. cap. 8.

[a] Neh. ix. 27; Judg. iii. 9, 15.
[b] Acts vii. 35.
[c] Heb. ii. 10.
[d] Acts iii. 15.
[e] Heb. xii. 2.
[f] Rom. i. 16.
[g] Acts v. 31.
[h] Col. i. 26; Rom. xvi. 25.

doing which (as having so much efficacy toward salvation, and being ordinarily so necessary thereto) is often called *saving;* as particularly by St. James; when he saith, *He that turns a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death.*[i] And by St. Paul: *Take heed to thy word and doctrine; for so doing thou shalt save thyself and thy hearers.*[j] That our Lord hath thus (according to his design, and according to reasonable esteem) *saved all men,* we are authorized by the holy scripture to say; for he is there represented to be *the light of the world; the true light that enlighteneth every man coming into the world: the day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.*[k] By him *the saving grace of God hath appeared unto all men.*[l] By him (as Isaiah prophesied, and St. John the Baptist applied it) *all flesh did see the salvation of God.*[m] Of him it was also foretold, as St. Paul teacheth us, *I have set thee for the light of the nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. Coming he preached peace* τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγὺς (*longe lateque*) *to them that were far, and them that were near;* that is, *to all men every where. While I am in the world* (said he) *I am the light of the world;*[n] shining, like the sun, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal presence, he further virtually diffused his light, for he sent his messenger with a general commission and command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them: *Going into the world, make all nations disciples, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. Going into the world, preach the gospel unto every creature* (or, *to the whole creation:* so it ought to be.) *That in his name should be preached repentance and remission of sins unto all nations.*[o] And such was the tenor of the apostolical commission; *Thou shalt be witness for him toward all men,*[p] said Ananias to St. Paul. Accordingly, in compliance with those orders, did the apostles, in God's name, instruct and admonish all men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading, and earnestly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the gospel, and consequently to be saved: *The times of ignorance* (saith St. Paul) *God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent:* and, *We are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God.*[q]—*We pray you,* you as members of that world which God was in Christ reconciling to himself; and, *We preach Christ——warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus* (or, *render every man a good Christian.*[r]) Thus was the gospel, according to our Saviour's intent and order, preached, as St. Paul saith of it, ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν, *in the whole creation under heaven;* thus did God show that he would *have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;*[s] whence our Lord (in regard to the nature and design of his performance in this kind) as the common Saviour, as the common master of truth, and enlightener of the world, and proclaimer of God's will to mankind.[t]

If now it be inquired or objected, Why, then, is not the gospel revealed unto all men? How comes it to pass, that no sound of this saving word, no glimpse of this heavenly light, doth arrive to many nations? How can so general and large intention consist with so particular and sparing execution? What benefit can we imagine them capable to receive from this performance of our Saviour, who still do sit in total ignorance of the gospel, *in darkness, and the shadow of death? How can they call upon him in whom they believe not? And how can they*

[i] James v. 20.
[j] 1 Tim. iv. 16.
[k] 1 Cor. ix 22; Rom. xi. 14; 2 Tim. iii. 15, σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν.—John viii. 12; i. 9; Luke i. 79.
[l] Tit. ii. 11; iii. 4; 2 Tim. i. 10.
[m] Luke iii. 6.
[n] Acts xiii. 47; Eph. ii. 17; John ix. 5.
[o] Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 15; Luke xxiv. 47.
[p] Acts xxii. 15; xxvi. 17.
[q] Acts xvii. 30; 2 Cor. v. 20.
[r] Col. i. 28.
[s] Acts ii. 40; Col. i. 23; 1 Tim. ii. 4.
[t] John i. 18.

believe in him of whom they have not heard?[v]

To this suggestion I answer,

1. That God's intentions are not to be interpreted, nor his performances estimated by events, depending on the contingency of human actions, but by his own declarations and precepts, together with the ordinary provision of competent means, in their own nature sufficient to produce those effects which he declares himself to intend or to perform. What he reveals himself to design, he doth really design it; what he says, that he performeth; he (according to moral esteem, that is, so far as to ground duties of gratitude and honour, proceedings of justice and reward) doth perform, although the thing upon other accounts be not effected.

Thus, for instance, God would have all men to live together here in peace, in order, in health, conveniently, comfortably, cheerfully; according to reason, with virtue and justice; and in the best state toward happiness: for these purposes he hath endued them with reasonable faculties, he hath engraven on their minds a natural law, he hath furnished them with all sorts of instruments and helps conducible to those ends; he promoteth them by dispensations of providence, and, probably, by internal influences of grace; yet often all those means, by the preverseness and stupidity of men, do prove ineffectual, so that wars, disorders, diseases, vices, iniquities and oppressions, troubles and miseries, do commonly abound in the world. Likewise God desires, that in his church, knowledge and piety, peace and charity and good order, should grow and flourish; to which purposes he hath appointed teachers to instruct, and governors to watch over his people: he hath obliged each man to advise and admonish his brother; he hath declared holy precepts and rules of practice; he hath propounded vast encouragements and rewards, and threatened dreadful punishments; he hath promised and doth afford requisite assistances; being himself always present and ready to promote those ends by his grace: yet notwithstanding, by the voluntary neglect or abuse of these means (the guides being blind, negligent, unfaithful; or the people being indocile, sluggish, refractory; or both perverted with bad affections), often ignorance, error, and impiety prevail, love is cool and dead, schisms and factions are rife in the church. Which events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-will and good intentions, or to his kind and careful providence toward men; but we are notwithstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the author and donor of those good things; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished by man's concurrence and compliance; he having done his part in that due measure and manner which wisdom prompts; having indeed done the same, as when they are effected. So God having expressly declared, that he would have all men to know and embrace the gospel, having made a universal promulgation thereof, having sent forth apostles to disseminate it every where, having obliged every man to confer his best endeavour toward the propagation thereof; if by the want of fidelity, zeal, or industry in them, to whom this care is intrusted, or upon whom this duty is incumbent; or if by the carelessness and stupidity of those who do not regard what is done in the world; or if by men's voluntary shutting their eyes, or stopping their ears (as the Jews did of old to the prophetical instructions and admonitions), God's heavenly truth becometh not universally known, it is not reasonable to impute this defailance to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design men's instruction and salvation consequent thereon. Let me, for the illustration of this matter, put a case, or propound a similitude. Suppose a great kingdom, consisting of several provinces, should have revolted from their sovereign; disclaiming his authority, neglecting and disobeying his laws; that the good prince, out of his goodness and pity toward them (and upon other good considerations moving him thereto, suppose the mediation of his own son), instead of prosecuting them with deserved vengeance, should grant a general pardon and amnesty, in these terms or upon these conditions, that whoever of those rebels willingly should come in, ac-

[v] Luke i. 74; Matt. iv. 16; Rom. x. 14.

knowledge his fault, and promise future loyalty, or obedience to his laws declared to them, should be received into favour, have impunity, enjoy protection, and obtain rewards from him. Further, for the effectuating this gracious intent, suppose that he should appoint and commissionate messengers, empowering and charging them to divulge the purport of this act of grace to all the people of that kingdom. Admit now, that these messengers should go forth and seat themselves only in some provinces of that kingdom, proclaiming this universal pardon (universal as to the design, and as to the tenor thereof) only in those, neglecting others; or that striving to propagate it further, they should be rejected and repelled; or that from any the like cause the knowledge thereof should not reach to some remoter provinces; it is plain, that indeed the effect of that pardon would be obstructed by such a carriage of the affair; but the tenor of that act would not thereby be altered; nor would the failure in execution (consequent upon the ministers' or the people's misbehaviour) detract from the real amplitude of the prince's intent; no more than the wilful incredulity, refusal, or noncompliance of some persons, where the business is promulged and notified, would prejudice the same. It is plain the prince meant favourably toward all, and provided carefully for them; although by accident (not imputable to him) the designed favours and benefits do not reach all. The case so plainly suits our purpose, that I need not make any application. The holy Fathers do by several like similitudes endeavour to illustrate this matter, and somewhat to assoil the difficulty. They compare our Saviour to the sun,* who shines indifferently to all the world, although there be some private corners and secret caves, to which his light doth not come; although some shut their windows or their eyes, and exclude it; although some are blind, and do not see it.† That mystical Sun of Righteousness, saith St. Ambrose, is risen to all, come to all, did suffer and rose again for all——but if any one doth not believe in Christ, he defrauds himself of the general benefit. As if one shutting the windows should exclude the beams of the sun, the sun is not therefore not risen to all. They compare our Lord to a physician, who professes to relieve and cure all that shall have recourse to his help; but doth cure only those who seek for remedy, and are willing to take the medicine;* because all, saith St. Ambrose again, do not desire cure, but most do shun it, lest the ulcer should smart by medicaments; therefore *voletes carat, non astringit invitos;* he cures only the willing, doth not compel those that are unwilling; they only receive health who desire medicine.† Evangelical grace, say they, is like a fountain standing openly, to which all men have free access; at which all men may quench their thirst, if they will inquire after it, and go thereto. *The fountain of life* (saith Arnobius) *is open to all; nor is any man hindered or driven from the right of drinking it.*‡ The covenant of grace is (say they) a door standing open to all, whereinto all have liberty to enter—*When an entrance* (saith St. Chrysostom) *being opened to all, and there being nothing that hinders, some being wilfully naught abide without, they have no other but their own wickedness to impute their destruction unto.*||

* Ἀκούσατε οὖν οἱ μακρὰν· ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη τινὶ ὁ λόγος· φῶς ἐστι κοινόν· ἐπιλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· οὐδεὶς Κιμμέριος ἐν λόγῳ.—Clem. Alex. Protrep. "Hear ye that are far: hear ye that are near: the word is not hid to any: it is a common light: it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian in the word."

† Mysticus Sol ille justitiæ omnibus ortus est, omnibus venit, omnibus passus est, et omnibus resurrexit—si quis autem non credit in Christum, generali beneficio se fraudat, ut si quis clausis fenestris radios solis excludat, non ideo sol non ortus est omnibus, &c.—*Amb. in Psal.* cxviii. *Ser.* viii.

Si dies omnibus æqualiter nascitur, et si sol super omnes pari et æquali luce diffunditur, quanto magis Christus Sol et dies verus in ecclesia sua lumen vitæ æternæ pari æqualitate largitur.—*Cypr. Epist.* 76.

* Nunquid non medicus idcirco proponit in publico, ut omnes se ostendat velle salvare si velint.—*Ambr.* i. tom. 2.

† Venit—ut vulnera nostra curaret, sed quia non omnes medicinam expetunt, sed plerique refugiunt, ne medicamentis compungatur vis ulceris, ideo volentes, &c.—*Ambr. de David.* iii. 11.

‡ Patet omnibus fons vitæ, neque ab jure potandi quisquam prohibetur, aut pellitur.—*Arnob.* lib. 2.

|| Ὅταν τῆς εἰσόδου πᾶσιν ἀνεῳγμένης, καὶ μηδενὸς τοῦ κωλύοντος ὄντος, ἐθελοκακήσαντές τινες ἔξω μένωσι, παρ' οὐδένα ἕτερον, ἀλλ' ἢ παρὰ τὴν οἰκείαν πονηρίαν ἀπόλλυνται.—Chrys. in Joh. i. Homil. 7.

And again he puts the question, *If Christ enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, how is it that so many remain unenlightened?* &c. To which he answers, That *if some wilfully shutting the eyes of their minds, will not receive the beams of this light, it is not from the nature of light that those remain still in darkness, but from the wickedness of those who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift of it.**

St. Gregory Nazienzen resembles the grace of baptism (as to its community and freedom of use) to the breathing of the air, to the spreading of light, to the vicissitude of seasons, to the aspect of the creation;† things most obvious and common to all.

If this answer do not fully satisfy, I adjoin further,

2. That God, beside that ordinary provision, is ready to interpose extraordinarily in disclosing his truth to them who are worthy of such favour, and fit to receive it; and that God's general desire and design of revealing his truth to all men is very well consistent with his providential (not only negative and permissive, but even positive and active) withholding the discovery thereof from some persons, yea some nations; for that neither his wisdom, goodness, or justice, might permit him, that he should impart that revelation to such persons whom he seeth altogether indisposed to comply therewith, and unfit to profit thereby; who have extremely abused the lesser graces, and not improved or misimproved the lesser talents afforded them; detained inferior truths in unrighteousness, and *have not liked to retain God in their knowledge*,[o] have therefore justly been delivered up to a reprobate sense; who have so depraved their minds with wicked prejudices and affections, that the truth being offered to them, they would certainly either stupidly neglect it or scornfully reject it; or if admitting it in show, would unworthily abuse it; so that from the imparting the means of knowing it, no glory to God, no benefit to man would accrue, but rather contempt of God and prejudice to men would ensue upon it: there are some persons of that wicked and *gigantic*[p] disposition (contracted by evil practice), that should one offer to instruct them in truth, or move them to piety, would be ready to say with Polyphemus in Homer (*Odyss.* ι'. 273, 4),

> Νήπιος εἶς, ὦ ξεῖν', ἢ τηλόθεν εἰλήλουθας,
> Ὅς με θεοὺς κέλεαι ἢ δειδίμεν, ἢ ἀλέασθαι.

> Friend, you are a fool, or a great stranger to me,
> Who advisest me to fear or regard the Deity.

Or (which is the same) with Pharaoh: *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*[q] (or neither will I do as you in God's name admonish me;) who, like that unhappy prince, by no efficacy of arguments, no wonders of power, are to be convinced of their folly, or converted from their wickedness:[r] some, like those of Chorazin and Bethsaida, whom not all the powerful discourses spoken to them, all the mighty works done in them, sufficient to have brought Tyre and Sidon, to repentance, can induce to mind or obey the truth:[s] unto which sort of people (except upon some particular occasions, and for special reasons) it is not expedient that divine truth should be exposed. We may also observe how our Lord being asked by St. Jude a question like to ours, *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not to the world?* thus resolves it: *If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him:*[t] implying the ordinary reason of God's making a difference in the discoveries of himself to be the previous disposition and behaviours of men toward God; and interpretatively toward our Lord himself.

That God doth commonly observe this

* Εἰ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πῶς ἀφώτιστοι μεμενήκασι τοσοῦτοι; οὐ γὰρ δὴ πάντες ἐπέγνωσαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ τὸ σέβας· πῶς οὖν φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον; τόγε εἰς αὐτὸν ἧκον· εἰ δὲ τινες ἑκόντες τοὺς τῆς διανοίας ὀφθαλμοὺς μύσαντες, οὐκ ἐθέλησαν παραδέξασθαι τοῦ φωτὸς τούτου τὰς ἀκτῖνας, οὐ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ φωτὸς φύσιν ἡ σκότωσις ἐκείνοις, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν κακουργίαν τῶν ἑκοντὶ ἀποστεροῦντων ἑαυτοὺς τῆς δωρεᾶς· ἡ μὲν γὰρ χάρις εἰς πάντας ἐκκέχυται—πάντως δὲ ὁμοίως προσιεμένη καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἴσης καλοῦσα τιμῆς· οἱ δὲ μὴ θέλοντες ἀπολαῦσαι τῆς δωρεᾶς ταύτης, ἑαυτοῖς δίκαιοι ταύτην ἂν εἶεν λογίσασθαι τὴν πήρωσιν.—Chrys. in Joh. i. Homil. 7.

† —— ὡς ἀέρος πνεῦσιν, ὡς φωτὸς χύσιν, καὶ ὡρῶν ἀλλαγὰς, καὶ κτίσεως θέαν——. Naz. Orat. 40.

[o] Rom. i. 18, 28.

[p] Isa. xxx. 10.

[q] Exod. v. 2.

[r] Prov. i. 24.

[s] Luke x. 13.

[t] John xiv. 22.

method (plainly suitable to divine justice, wisdom, and goodness) to dispense the revelation of his truth according to men's disposition to receive it, and aptness to make a fruitful and worthy use of it, *to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*,[u] as St. John Baptist spake; and to withhold it from those who are indisposed to admit it, or unfit to profit by it; we may from divers express passages and notable instances (beside many probable intimations) of scripture learn. We may on the one hand observe, that those whom our Saviour did choose to call, were persons disposed easily upon his call to comply; to forsake their fathers and their nets; to leave their receipts of custom; to relinquish all (relations, occupations, estates), and to follow him; faithful Israelites, without guile, like Nathaniel (that is, as is probably conjectured, St. Bartholomew;) men honestly devout, and charitable, like Zaccheus;[v] that he chose to converse with publicans and sinners, men apt to be convinced of their errors, and touched with the sense of their sins; apt to see their need of mercy and grace, and therefore ready to entertain the overtures of them; that he blesses God for revealing his mysteries to babes (to innocent and well-meaning, imprejudicate and uncorrupted persons), such as if men were not, they could in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven, or become Christians; those *poor in spirit, of whom is the kingdom of heaven*; those *foolish things* which God chooses as most fit objects of his mercy and grace;[w] that he enjoined his disciples, in their travels for the promulgation and propagation of the gospel, to inquire concerning the worthiness or fitness of persons, and accordingly to make more close applications to them: *Into what city or village ye enter, inquire who therein is worthy*;[x] and entering in, abide there. Of this proceeding we have a notable instance in Cornelius, who for his honest piety (correspondent to the proportion of knowledge vouchsafed him) was so acceptable to God, that in regard thereto he obtained from him the revelation of truth in a peculiar and extraordinary manner. And St. Paul was another most remarkable example thereof; who for the like reason was so wonderfully called, as himself intimates, describing himself to have been ζηλωτὴς Θεοῦ, *zealously affected toward God, according to the righteousness in the law, blameless*; one that had *continually behaved himself with all good conscience toward* God;[y] who even in the persecution of God's truth did proceed with an honest meaning, and according to his conscience, for which cause he saith, that God had mercy on him;[z] foreseeing how willingly he would embrace the truth, and how earnestly promote it. We may also observe, how, in the Acts of the Apostles the Holy Spirit commonly directed the apostles to such places, where a competent number of people were well disposed to receive the truth;[a] who were εὔθετοι εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *well disposed to the kingdom of heaven*,[b] and consequently by God's foresight (τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον) *ordained to have the word of eternal life* (the τὸ σωτήριον Θεοῦ, as it is in a parallel place called) discovered to them:[c] such people as the Bereans, men ingenuous and tractable; who consequently entertained the word, μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, with all promptitude and alacrity. To such persons God sometimes by extraordinary revelation directed the apostles to preach; as to the Corinthians, in respect to whom the Lord spake to St. Paul in a vision, saying, *Fear not, but speak, and be not silent; for I am with thee, because* πολύς ἐστί μοι λαὸς, *there is for me much people in this city*;[d] *much people* whom I see disposed to comply with my truth. So in behalf of the Macedonians, ἀνήρ τις Μακεδὼν, *a certain man of Macedonia*, was in a vision seen to St. Paul, *exhorting him and saying, Passing into Macedonia, help us*.[e] Thus on that hand doth God take special care that his truth be manifested to such as are fitly qualified to embrace it and use it well: thus is God ready to make

[u] Matt. iii. 8; 1 Cor xii. 7.

[v] Matt. iv. 18; John i. 24, 37; Matt. xix. 27; John i. 47; Luke xix. 8, 9; Matt. xxi. 31; Luke v. 31.

[w] Matt. xviii. 3; xix. 14; v. 3; 1 Cor. i. 27.

[x] Matt. x. 11.

[y] Acts xxii. 3; xxiii. 1, Πεπολίτευμαι.— Phil. iii. 6.

[z] Acts xxvi. 9; Gal. i. 14.

[a] Acts xxvi.; 1 Tim. i. 3.

[b] Luke ix. 62.

[c] Acts xiii. 48; xvii. 11; xxviii. 28.

[d] Acts xviii. 9, 10.

[e] Acts xvi. 9.

good that answer of Pothinus (bishop of Lyons, and immediate successor to St. Irenæus) to the prefect, who asking him *who was the Christian's God*, was answered, Ἐὰν ᾖς ἄξιος, γνώσῃ, *If thou be worthy, thou shalt know;*[f] thus, as the Wise Man divinely saith, the divine Wisdom, ἀξίους αὐτῆς περιέρχεται ζητοῦσα, *goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her; showeth herself favourable unto them in their ways, and meeteth them in every thought.*[g]

And on the other hand, that God withholds the special discoveries of his truth, upon account of men's indispositions and demerits, may likewise very plainly appear. We may suppose our Lord to have observed himself what he ordered to his disciples: *Not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor to cast their pearls before swine*[h] (not to expose the holy and precious truth to very lewd and fierce people, who would snarl at it and trample upon it:) we may allow God in his dispensation of his truth and grace to do what he bids the apostles to do: before he enters into any house, or applies himself to any person, to examine whether the house or person be worthy, that is, willing to receive him, and apt to treat him well; if not, to decline them.[i]

Our Lord, we see, did leave even his own country, seeing men there were not disposed to use him with due honour and regard;[j] seeing they were possessed with vain prejudices, apt to obstruct the efficacy of his divine instructions and miraculous performances; so that he was not likely (according to the ordinary way of divine providence) to produce any considerable effect towards their conversion. *He could not*, it is said, *do many miracles there, because of their unbelief;* he could not, that is, according to the most just and wise rules he did observe, he would not do them; because he perceived the doing them would not conduce to any good purpose; that they were not apt to look upon those works as the effects of divine power and goodness, performed for their benefit (for inducing them to faith and repentance), but rather that the doing them would expose God's mercy to contempt or reproach, at least to neglect or disregard. Hence our Saviour declined conversing with persons indisposed to (those ψυχικοὶ, who cannot δέχεσθαι τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος) receive benefit by his instruction and example;[k] to grow wiser or better by his conversation; as the Pharisees and Scribes;[l] men prepossessed with corrupt opinions and vicious affections, obstructive to the belief of his doctrine and observance of his law; and worldly persons; proud and self-conceited, crafty and deceitful, covetous, ambitious and worldly men, incorrigibly tinctured with that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *carnal wisdom and affection;* which *is enmity to God; so that it is not subject to the law of God, nor can be;* inextricably engaged in the friendship of the world, which is enmity to God:[m] to such men the gospel would certainly be a scandal or a folly: they would never be able to relish or digest the doctrine of purity, self-denial, patience, and the like doctrines opposite to carnal sense and conceit which it teacheth.[n] From such wise and prudent men (conceited of their little wisdoms, and doting upon their own fancies) God did conceal those heavenly mysteries, which they would have despised and derided:[o] those *many wise, according to the flesh, many powerful, many noble*, God did not choose to call into his church.[p] Accordingly we may observe in the history of the apostles, that God's Spirit did prohibit the apostles passing through some places, it discerning how unsuccessful (at those seasons, in those circumstances, according to those dispositions of men) their preaching would be: *Passing through Phrygia and Galatia, being hindered by the Spirit to speak the word in Asia; coming to Mysia, they essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.*[q] Moreover, there is plainly the like reason why God should withhold his saving truth from some people, as why he should withdraw it from others; when it is abused or proves fruitless: but of such withdrawing we have many plain instances, attended with the declaration of the reasons of them: our

[f] Euseb. v. 1.
[g] Wisd. vi. 16.
[h] Matt. vii. 6.
[i] Matt. x. 11.
[j] Matt. xiii. 57, 58.
[k] 1 Cor. ii. 14.
[l] Matt. xxi. 31.
[m] Rom. viii. 7; James iv. 4; 1 John ii. 15.
[n] 1 Cor. i. 23.
[o] Matt. xi. 25.
[p] 1 Cor. i. 26; James ii. 5.
[q] Acts xvi. 6, 7.

Lord prophesied thus concerning the Jews: *I say unto you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation doing the fruits thereof;*[r] they, when our Saviour would have gathered them under his wings, wilfully refusing. Our Lord charged his disciples, when by any they were repulsed or neglected in their preaching, to leave those persons and places, *shaking off the dust from their feet*, in token of an utter (εἰς μαρτύριον ἐπ' αὐτοὺς) detestation and desertion of them:[s] and accordingly we see them practising in their acts; when they perceived men perversely contradictious, or desperately senseless and stupid, so that they clamoured against the gospel, and thrust it from them, they abstained from further dealing with them, turning their endeavours otherwhere, toward persons of a more docile and ingenuous temper; thence more susceptible of faith and repentance: *To you* (say Paul and Barnabas to the contradicting and reproachful Jews) *it was necessary the word of God should first have been spoken; but seeing you put it from you* (*or thrust it away from you*, ἀπωθεῖσθε αὐτὸν), *and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles.*[t] So when the church of Ephesus was grown cold in charity, and deficient in good works, God threatens to remove her candlestsck;[v] or to withdraw from her that light of truth, which shone with so little beneficial influence. It seems evident that God for the like reasons may withhold the discovery of his truth, or forbear to interpose his providence; so as to transmit light thither, where men's deeds are so evil that they will love darkness rather than light;* where their eyes are so dim and weak, that the light will but offend, and by the having it, hurt them; where they, by the having it declared to them, will only incur further mischief and misery; it would prove to them but ὀσμὴ θανάτου, *a deadly scent*,[w] as the most comfortable perfumes are offensive sometimes and noxious to distempered bodies. Wherefore as where the light doth shine most clearly, it is men's voluntary pravity that by it many are not effectually brought to salvation; so it is men's voluntary depraving and corrupting themselves (misusing their natural light, choaking the seeds of natural ingenuity, thwarting God's secret whispers and motions, complying with the suggestions of the wicked one), so as to be rendered unmeet for the susception of God's heavenly truth and grace, which hinders God (who proceedeth ordinary with men, in sweet and reasonable methods, not in way of impetuous violence and coaction) from dispensing them: we may say of such in the words of the prophet, *They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. Your iniquities have turned away these things and your sins have withholden good things from you.*[x] Τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἀγαθότητι πᾶσιν ὁ Κύριος ἐγγίζει· μακρύνομεν δὲ ἑαυτοὺς ἡμεῖς διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας, *God doth by his goodness approach to all, but we set ourselves at a distance by sin*, saith St. Basil;[y] and ὅπου αὐτοπροαίρετος πονηρία, ἐκεῖ καὶ ἀποχὴ τῆς χάριτος, *where there is self-chosen or affected wickedness, there is a withholding of grace*, saith another Father (*apud* Cyrill. Hier.) The *gospel, if it be hidden*, it is, as St. Paul says, *hidden* ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *in viris perditis, among lost men*[z] (that is, men desperately gone in wickedness, incorrigible, unreclaimable people), *in whom the God of this world* (that is, as St. Chrysostom expounds it,[a] not the devil, but the good God himself) *hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, so that the light of the gospel hath not shined to them* (πῶς οὖν ἐτύφλωσεν; *how then did God blind them?* saith St. Chrysostom), οὐκ ἐνεργήσας εἰς τοῦτο, ἄπαγε· *not by any efficacy of his upon them toward that; fie on that;* ἀλλ' ἀφεὶς καὶ συγχωρήσας, *but by permission and concession;* for so the scripture is wont to speak; Ἐπειδὰν γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἠπίστησαν πρῶτοι, καὶ ἀναξίους ἑαυτοὺς κατεσκεύασαν τοῦ ἰδεῖν τὰ μυστήρια, καὶ αὐτὸς λοιπὸν εἴασεν· ἀλλὰ τί ἔδει ποιῆσαι; πρὸς βίαν ἕλκειν, καὶ ἐκκαλύπτειν μὴ βουλομένοις ἰδεῖν; ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἂν κατεφρόνησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν εἶδον.

* Καὶ γὰρ τὸς ὸς (φασὶ) τὸ μῦρον πνίγει.—Chrys.—John iii. 19.

[r] Matt. xxi. 43.

[s] Matt. x. 14; Luke ix. 5; Acts xiii. 51; xviii. 6.

[t] Acts xiii. 46; xxviii. 26.

[v] Rev. ii. 5.

[w] 2 Cor. ii. 16.

[x] Isa. lxvi. 3; Jer. v. 25.

[y] Bas. in Psal. xxxiii.

[z] 2 Cor. iv. 3.

[a] Εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι αὐτοῖς.—Chrys. in 2 Cor. iv. 4.

Seeing (saith he) *they disbelieved first, and constituted themselves unworthy to see the mysteries, even God at last let them alone; for what should he have done? Should he have drawn them violently, and discovered it to them being unwilling to see? They would then have more despised it, and not have seen it.* God is ever willing and ready to dispense his mercies and favours, but he is not wont to do it extraordinarily (or beside the course of his ordinary provision), but in a proper and fit season (in that καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, *acceptable time and day of salvation*, when he seeth men capable of receiving them;[b]) which season commonly dependeth upon man's will and choice, or the results of them. *Καθόλου γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς οἶδεν τούς τε ἀξίους τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ μή· ὅθεν τὰ προσήκοντα ἑκάστοις δίδωσιν. Σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν· οὐχὶ τῶν μὲν, τῶν δ' οὐ· πρὸς δὴ ὅσον ἐπιτηδειότητος ἕκαστος εἶχεν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ διένειμεν εὐεργεσίαν·* for (saith Clemens Alex. in his 7th of the Stromata,[c] where he clearly and fully affirms our present doctrine) *Our Lord is not the Saviour of some and not of others; but, according as men are fitly disposed, he hath distributed his beneficence to all.* St. Augustine himself somewhere speaketh no less; or rather more: *Præcedit aliquid in peccatoribus* (saith he), *quo, quamvis nondum sint justificati, digni efficia ntur justificatione: et idem præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione.** But,

3. If all these considerations do not thoroughly satisfy us concerning the reason of God's proceedings in this case, we may consider that God's providence is inscrutable and impenetrable to us; that, according to the Psalmist, as *God's mercy is in the heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth to the clouds;* so *his righteousness is like the great mountains* (too high for our reason to climb), *and his judgments*, πολλὴ ἄβυσσος, a great abyss, too deep for our feeble understanding to fathom;[d] that his ways are more subtile and spiritual than to be traced by our dim and gross sight. So upon contemplation of a like case, although, as it seems, hardly so obscure or unaccountable as this, the case concerning God's conditional rejection of that people, whom he in a special manner had so much and so long favoured, St. Paul himself doth profess.[e] That therefore although we cannot fully resolve the difficulty, we notwithstanding without distrust should adhere to those positive and plain declarations, whereby God representeth himself seriously designing, and earnestly desiring, *that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth; that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance;*[f] not doubting but his declared mind, and his secret providence, although we cannot thoroughly discern or explain their consistency, do yet really and fully conspire. But no further at this time.

* Quæst. 68; e Quæst. 83, tom. iv. part i. Venit. de occultissimis meritis, &c.—*Ibid.*

[b] Luke xix. 44; 2 Cor. vi. 2; Rom. xiii. 11.

[c] Clem. Strom. vii. p. 105.

[d] Psal. xxxvi. 6.

[e] Rom. xi. 33.

[f] 2 Pet. iii. 9.

SERMON LXXIV.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

8. As our Saviour was such to all men by his doctrine, or the general discovery of all saving truth; so may he be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary practice; whereby upon the open stage of the world, and in the common view of all that would attend unto him, he did represent a living pattern of all goodness; by imitating which, we may certainly attain salvation. He that will consider his practice shall find it admirably fitted for general instruction and imitation; calculated for all places and all sorts of people; suited to the complexions, to the capacities, to the degrees, to the callings of all men; so that every sort of men may from it draw profitable direction, may in it find a copy, even of his particular behaviour: for he was a great Prince, illustrious in birth, excellent in glory, and abounding in all wealth; yet was born in obscurity, lived without pomp, and seemed to possess nothing; so teaching men of high rank to be sober, mild, and humble; not to rest in, not to regard much, not to hug and cling to the accommodations and shows of worldly state;

teaching those of mean degree to be patient, content, and cheerful in their station. He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without bound or measure; yet made no ostentation of extraordinary knowledge, of sharp wit, of deep subtilty; did not vent high, dark, or intricate notions; had in his practice no reaches and windings of craft or policy; but was in his doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his practice very open and clear; so that what he commonly said or did, not only philosophers and statesmen, but almost the simplest idiots, might easily comprehend; so that those might thence learn not to be conceited of their superfluous wisdom; these not to be discouraged in their harmless ignorance; both having thence an equally sufficient instruction in all true righteousness, a complete direction in the paths to happiness, being thereby, σοφιζόμενοι εἰς σωτηρίαν, made wise and learned to salvation.[a] He did not immerse himself in the cares, nor engage himself into the businesses of this world; yet did not withdraw himself from the company and conversation of men: he retired often from the crowd, that he might converse with God and heavenly things; he put himself into it, that he might impart good to men, and benefit the world, declining no sort of society; but indifferently conversing with all; disputing with the doctors, and eating with the publicans; whence thereby both men of contemplative and quiet dispositions or vocations, and men of busy spirits, or of active lives, may be guided respectively; those not to be morose, supercilious, rigid, contemptuous, toward other men; these not to be so possessed or entangled with the world, as not to reserve some leisure for the culture of their minds, not to employ some care upon the duty of piety and devotion; both may learn, whether in private retirements, or in public conversation and employment, especially to regard the service of God and the benefit of men: thus was the example of our Lord accommodated for all men; especially conducting them in the hardest and roughest parts of the way leading to bliss, the acclivities and asperities of duty; self-denial, or neglect of worldly glory and fleshly pleasure, patience, humility, general charity; showing us the possibility of performing such duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through these difficult and dangerous passages (as a resolute chieftain of life[b]) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beating back, and breaking through all opposite forces, all enemies, all temptations, all obstacles; enduring painfully the most furious assaults of the world; boldly withstanding and happily conquering the most malicious rage of hell; so that victory and salvation we shall be certain of, if we pursue his steps, and do not basely (out of faintness or falsehood) desert so good a leader;[c] we shall not fail of the unfading crown, if *with patience we run the race that is set before us, looking unto the Captain and Perfector of our faith, Jesus, who, for the joy proposed unto him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*[d] Would it not raise and inflame any courage to see his commander to adventure so boldly upon all hazards, to endure so willingly all hardships? Whom would not the sight of such a forerunner[e] animate and quicken in his course; who, by running in the straight way of righteousness with alacrity and constancy, hath obtained himself a most glorious crown, and holdeth forth another like thereto, for the reward of those who follow him? Now as our Lord's doctrine, so did his example, in the nature and design thereof, respect and appertain to all men, it being also like the light of heaven, a common spectacle, a public guide, *to guide our steps in the way of peace:* if it do not appear so, if it do not effectually direct all, it is by accident, and beside God's intention; it is by the fault of them who should propound it, or of them who have not eyes fit or worthy to behold it; briefly what was said concerning the universal revelation of Christian doctrine may be applied to Christ's practice.

9. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*, as having combated and vanquished all the enemies of man's welfare and happiness; dispossessing them of all their pretences

[a] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

[b] Ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς,—Acts iii. 15.

[c] 1 Pet. ii. 21.

[d] Heb. xii. 2; 1 Pet. v. 4; Ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον,—στέφανος ζωῆς; Rev. ii. 10; James, i. 12.

[e] Πρόδρομος—Heb. vi. 20.

and usurpations over man, disarming them of all their power and force against him; enabling us to withstand and overcome them. Man's salvation hath many adversaries of different nature and kind; some directly oppugning it, some formally prejudicing it, some accidentally hindering it; some alluring, some forcing, some discouraging from it, or from the means conducing to it: the chief of them we may from the scripture (with consent of experience) reckon to be the *Devil*, with all his envy and malice, his usurpations, his delusions, and his temptations to sin; the *world*, with its snares and baits, its violences, persecutions, and menaces; the *flesh*, or natural concupiscence, with its bad inclinations and propensities to evil, its lusts and pleasures; *sin*, with its guilt, and mischievous consequences; the *law*, with its rigorous exactions, hard measure, and harsh boding; *conscience*, with its accusations and complaints, its terrors and anguishes; *divine anger*, with its effects, *death* and *hell*. All these our Lord hath in several and suitable ways defeated; as to their malignity, contrariety, or enmity in respect to man's salvation;* he hath, as Zachariah prophesieth in his Benedictus, *saved us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us: so that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might* (ἀφόβως) *safely and securely, without danger or fear, serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*[f]

The *Devil* (that *enemy*, that *adversary*, that *accuser*, that *slanderer*, that *murderer*, that *greedy lion*, that *crafty serpent*, the *strong one*, the *mischievous one*, the *destroyer*), who usurped an authority and exercised a domination over mankind, as *the prince of this world;* who made prize of them, *captivated them at his pleasure;*[g] who detained them under the power (or authority) of darkness and wickedness; who had the power of death; him our Saviour hath destroyed or defeated (καταργήσεν, as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh;[h] that is, abolished him as to any further pretence of empire or power over us;) him he hath dejected from heaven (*I saw Satan like lightning falling down from heaven;*) him *he hath cast out: Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out:* all *his works he hath dissolved:*[i] *For this cause* (saith St. John) *the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil.*[j] He combated *this strong one*[k] (this mighty and dreadful foe of ours), and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him (taking away πανοπλιαν αὐτοῦ, *the whole armour* in which he trusted), and *spoiled him* (τὰ σκεύη διήρπασε, *rifled all his baggage*, bare away all his instruments of mischief), and plundered all his house;[l] leaving him unable (without our fault, our baseness, our negligence) to do us mischief (as is intimated in the 12th of St. Matthew and 11th of St. Luke;) yea, *he triumphed over* all those infernal principalities and powers, and exposed them, as St. Paul saith:[m] he imparted to his disciples ability to *trample upon all his power*,[n] by him all his followers are so fortified as *to conquer the wicked one*, as St. John says: he affordeth light to discover *all his wiles and snares*, strength and courage *to withstand all his assaults, to repel all his fiery darts, to put him to flight.*[o]

The *world* also (that is, the wicked principles, the bad customs, the naughty conversation and example which commonly prevail here among men; alluring to evil and deterring from good; the cares also, the riches, the pleasures, the glories of the world, who possess or distract the minds, satiate and cloy the desires, employ all the affections and endeavours, take up the time of men; all in the world which fasteneth our hearts to earth, and to these low transitory things; or which sink them down toward

* —— ὁ Χριστὸς οὐδὲν τῆς ἰδίας ποιήσεως προσκατέλιπε τῷ ἄρχοντι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.—Athan. contra Apoll. p. 628.

[f] Luke i. 71, 74.

[g] Matt. xiii. 28; Luke xi. 19; 1 Pet. v. 8; Dragon, Rev. xii. 3, &c.; Acts x. 38; 1 John ii. 14; Rev. xii. 9; John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11; Ephes. ii. 2; vi. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Coloss. i. 13; Acts xxvi. 18; x. 38; 2 Tim. ii. 26.

[h] Heb. ii. 14.

[i] Luke x. 18; John. xii. 31; xvi. 11.

[j] 1 John iii. 8.

[k] Matt. xii. 29.

[l] Luke xi. 21, 22.

[m] Coloss. ii. 15, ἐδειγμάτισεν.

[n] Luke x. 19.

[o] 1 John ii. 14; Eph. vi. 11; 2 Cor. ii. 11; Eph. vi. 16; 1 Pet. v. 9; Eph iv. 27; James iv. 7.

hell; and which detain them from soaring toward heaven) is an enemy, an irreconcileable enemy to our salvation; the friendship thereof being inconsistent with a friendship in us toward the God of our salvation; or in him toward us: for *the friendship of the world is enmity with God;* and, *If any man love the world, the friendship of the Father is not in him.*[p] And this enemy our Lord hath vanquished, and enabled us to overcome. *Be of courage* (saith he) *I have overcome the world:*[q] *he*, by a constant self-denial and temperance, defeated the bewitching pleasures and flattering glories of it; *he*, by an immovable patience, baffled the terrible frowns and outrageous violences of it; *he*, by a resolute and invincible maintenance of truth, in great measure routed and dissipated the errors and oppositions thereof; *he*, by a general and intense charity, surmounted the provocations, envies, and enmities thereof; *he* did it himself for us, and *he* also enabled us to do it; furnishing us with sufficient strength, and fit weapons, whereby we may combat and conquer it; may sustain and repel its force; may shun and elude its baits; for, *every one that* (by faith in him) *is born of God doth overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*[r] In all these things (that is, in whatever concerns the world and its enmity: *tribulation*, or *distress*, or *persecution*, or *famine*, or *nakedness*, or *peril*, or *sword*), *we are* (saith St. Paul) *more than conquerors through him that loves us; thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ:*[s] our Lord hath procured for us hopes that will raise our minds and affections above the world; objects employing our care and endeavour far beyond it; satisfactions that will cheer our hearts and satiate our desires without it; comforts that will support and sustain our spirits against all the terrors, all the assaults, all the evils thereof; by his means it is that we have no reason either to love it, or to fear it, or to value it, or to be concerned about it; but to contemn it as a thing unworthy of us and below us.

The *flesh*[t] also (that is, all that within us of bodily temper or natural constitution, which inclineth and swayeth us to vicious excess in sensual enjoyments; which disposeth us to the inordinate love of ourselves, and of other creatures; which *lusts against the spirit*, and is adversary thereto; which blindeth and darkeneth our minds in the apprehension of our judgment concerning divine things; which perverteth and disableth (enfeebleth) our wills in the choice and prosecution of what is good; which discomposeth and disordereth the affections and passions of our soul; which continually enticeth and seduceth us to sin) is also an enemy; a very powerful, very treacherous, very dangerous, and very mischievous enemy to us and our welfare;[u] rendering us enemies to God (for *the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*), being *another law in our members warring against the law of our mind, and captivating us to the law of sin;* engendering and fostering those *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*[v] whose works and fruits are all sorts of intemperance, impurity, pride, envy, contentiousness: this capital enemy of ours our Lord did in his own person first subdue, rejecting all the suggestions and thwarting the impulses thereof; entirely submitting to and performing the will of God; even in willingly drinking that cup, which was so distasteful, so grievous to natural will and fleshly desire.[w] He so conquered the flesh in himself for us; he also conquers it in us, by the guidance and assistance of his grace enabling us to withstand it, and to overcome it. *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* (saith St. Paul) *hath freed me from the law of sin and death.*[x] He infuses a light discussing those fogs which stream from carnal sense and appetite; so that we may clearly discern divine

[p] James iv. 4; 1 John ii. 15.
[q] John xvi. 33.
[r] 1 John v. 4, 5.
[s] Rom. viii. 38; 2 Cor. ii. 14; Phil. i. 28.
[t] Gal. v. 24.
[u] 1 Cor. ii. 14; Matt. xxvi. 41; Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii. 18, 19; James i. 14.
[v] Rom. viii. 7; vii. 23; 1 Pet. ii. 11; Gal. v. 19; 1 Cor. iii. 3; Col. iii. 5.
[w] Luke xxii. 42; Matt. xxvi. 39; John xvii. 19; Heb ii. 10.
[x] Rom. viii. 2.

truths, the will of God, the way to happiness: he inserteth principles of spiritual life and strength, counterpoising and overswaying corporeal and sensual propensions; so that we can restrain sensual desires, and compose irregular passions, and submit readily to God's will, and observe cheerfully God's law, and freely comply with the dictates of the Spirit, or of right reason;[y] he so continually aideth, encourageth, and upholds us, that we *can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth* us;[z] so that by his power and help *the flesh with its affections and lusts are crucified;* the *earthly members are mortified; the old man* (*which was corrupted according to deceitful lusts*) *is put off; the body of sin is so destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; sin doth not reign in our mortal bodies, so that we* (must) *obey it in the lusts thereof; we are renewed in the spirit of our minds;* and *do put on the new man, which is created according to God in righteousness and true holiness.*[a]

Our *sins* also are very grievous enemies of ours, loading us with heavy guilt, stinging us with bitter remorse and anxious fear, keeping us under miserable bondage, exposing us to extreme mischief and misery;[b] them our Lord hath also routed and vanquished: in regard to this performance was the name Jesus assigned to him; as the angel told Joseph: *She shall bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins;*[c] [*From their sins;* taking in all the causes and the consequences of them; from all those spiritual enemies which draw us or drive us into them;* from the guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment, the terror and anguish of conscience, the wrath and displeasure of God following upon them, the slavery under their dominion, the final condemnation and sufferance of grievous pains for them;] the guilt of sin he particularly freed us from: for *he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*[d] Christ died for sinners (for us then being sinners), that is, that he might deliver us from our sins, with all their causes, adjuncts, and consequences. *He bare our sins in his own body on the tree; the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin; he is the propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world; he was manifested to take away our sins; once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin* (*εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, to the abolition of sin*), *by the sacrifice of himself;*[e] we are *justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; by his obedience many are constituted righteous,* (or free from the guilt and imputation of sin;) *he justifies the ungodly:*[f] *covering their sins, and not imputing them unto them.*[g] So doth he wipe away the guilt of sin; and he voids the condemnation passed for them; for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus: who is there that can condemn, since Christ hath died, or rather hath risen again?*[h]

He hath also appeased God's wrath for sin, and removed the effects of it (the punishment and vengeance due to sin and threatened for it:) so that *being enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son; being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:* Jesus is the *ὁ ῥυόμενος, who delivers us from the wrath to come; being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath.*[i]

The strength and dominion of sin he hath also broken, by the grace afforded us, whereby we are able to resist and avoid it: so that *sin henceforth shall not domineer over us, or reign in our mortal body: Being freed from sin, we are enslaved to righteousness, and made servants to God. The body of sin is de-*

* Ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου πάθους πληρεστάτην ἀπέδωκε τὴν σωτηρίαν, ἵνα ὅλον τὸν ἄνθρωπον ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἐνεχόμενον πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἐλευθερώσῃ.—Damasus Epist. apud Theod. v. 9.

[y] 2 Cor. iv. 6; 1 Cor. ii. 15; 1 John ii. 27; Eph. v. 8; Rom. xii. 2; 1 John v. 3; Phil. ii. 13.

[z] Phil. iv. 13.

[a] 2 Cor. iii. 5; Heb. xiii. 21; Gal. v. 24; Coloss. iii. 5; ii. 11; Eph. iv. 22; Rom. vi. 6, 12; viii. 13; Heb. xii. 1; Eph. iv. 23; ii. 10; Coloss. iii. 10.

[b] Heb. xii. 4, Πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι.

[c] Matt. i. 21; 1 Tim. i. 15.

[d] Rev. i. 5; 1 Pet. i. 19.

[e] 1 Pet. ii. 24; iii. 18; 1 John i. 7; ii. 2; iii. 5; iv. 10; Heb. i. 3; ix. 26, 28.

[f] Rom. iii. 24; v. 19.

[g] Rom. iv. 5, 6, 7.

[h] Rom. viii. 1, 34.

[i] Rom. v. 10, 1; 1 Thess. i. 10; Rom. v. 9.

stroyed, so that we no longer serve sin.[j] Whence consequently he hath subdued, utterly weakened, or quite destroyed (as to any force or mischievous influence upon us) those other adversaries, which depend upon sin, and by its power oppose and afflict us.

Our *conscience* is such an enemy, accusing us, condemning us, vexing us with the memory and sense of sin; suggesting to us the depth of our guilt, and the danger of our state, terrifying us with the expectation of punishment and vengeance: but our Lord (by securing us of mercy and favour upon repentance and sincere obedience) hath silenced and stilled this adversary; hath *by his blood* (as the apostle to the Hebrews says) *purged our conscience from dead works; hath delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage;*[k] so that thence we obtain a steady peace of mind, a joyful satisfaction in the service of God, a comfortable hope of future bliss: *peace, comfort*, and *joy*, are the adjuncts of that state he shall put us into, and the fruits of that Spirit he bestoweth on us.[l]

The *law* also (in its rigour, as requiring exact obedience, and as denouncing vengeance to them who in any point violate it) is, by reason of our weakness and inability so perfectly to observe it, an enemy to us; justifying no man, perfecting no man, causing, increasing, aggravating, *quickening, declaring* sin; *yielding occasion to sin of killing us, working wrath, ministering death and condemnation, subjecting us to a curse*, as St. Paul teacheth us:[m] but our Lord, by mitigating and abating the extreme rigour thereof, by procuring an acceptance of sincere (though not accurate) obedience, by purchasing and dispensing pardon for transgression thereof upon repentance, by conferring competent strength and ability to perform it in an acceptable degree, hath brought under this adversary; hath *redeemed us from the curse of the law;* hath *justified and imputed righteousness to us without the works of the law* (without such punctual performances as the law exacts:) we are *delivered from the law* (as to those effects of it;[n] the condemning, discouraging, enslaving us), we cease to be under the law (in those respects), being under grace, being led by the Spirit, as St. Paul tells us. The law indeed is still our rule, our guide, our governor; we are obliged to follow and obey it: but it ceases to be a tyrant over us, a tormentor of us.

Death is also an enemy (*The last enemy*, saith St. Paul, *which shall be destroyed, is death*,[o]) the enemy, which naturally we most fear and abominate; that which would utterly destroy us.

This enemy our Lord hath vanquished and destroyed;[p] by his death and resurrection he opened the way to a happy immortality; *he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel: He* by his *death defeated him that had the power of death; and delivered them who by fear of death were through their whole life subject to bondage;* he pulled out sin, which is the sting of death, and reversed the sentence of condemnation, to which we all stood obnoxious.[q] *The wages of sin* (that which we had deserved, and was by the law due to us for it) *was death, but the gift of God is everlasting life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.*[r]

Lastly, *hell* (that is, *utter darkness*, extreme discomfort, intolerable and endless misery,) the most dismal of all enemies, our Lord hath, by the virtue of his merits, and the power of his grace, put us into a capacity of avoiding: *He hath* (as St. Paul before told us) *delivered us from the wrath to come. O hell, where is thy victory? Death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.*[s]

Thus hath our Lord in our behalf vanquished and defeated every thing that is opposite or prejudicial to our salvation and welfare. Many, indeed, of these

[j] Rom. vi. 14, 12, 18, 22, 6.
[k] Heb. ix. 14; ii. 15.
[l] Rom. xv. 13; xiv. 17; Gal. v. 22.
[m] Gal. ii. 16; iii. 11; Heb. vii. 19; Rom. x. 5; viii. 3; Gal. iii. 12; v. 3; Rom. vii. 13; iv. 15; iii. 20; v. 20; vii. 7, 8, 10, 11; 1 Cor. xv. 56; 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9.
[n] Gal. iii. 13; Rom. iii. 21, 28; iv. 6; vii. 6, 4; vi. 14; Gal. v. 18.
[o] 1 Cor. xv. 26.
[p] Acts ii. 24
[q] 1 Cor. xv. 20; Acts xxvi. 23; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5; Acts iii. 15; 2 Tim. i. 10; Heb. ii. 14.
[r] Rom. vi. 23.
[s] 1 Thess. i. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 54; Rev. xx. 14.

things do in a more immediate, more peculiar, and more signal manner concern the faithful members of the Christian church, and are directly applied to them; yet all of them in some sort, according to God's design, and in respect to a remote capacity, may be referred to *all men.* They are benefits which God intended for *all men*, and which *all men* (if they be not faulty and wanting to themselves) may obtain. How they more especially appertain to the faithful, we may show afterward.

APPLICATION.

1. Hence ariseth great matter and cause of glorifying God; both from the thing itself and its extent; for the magnitude of beneficence is to be estimated, not only according to the degree of quality, but according to its amplitude of object: to redeem any doth signify goodness, to redeem many doth increase it, to redeem all doth advance it to the highest pitch; the more are obliged, the greater is the glory due to the benefactor.

Hence the *earth being full of the goodness of the Lord, the Lord being gracious unto all, and his mercy being over all his works*, all creatures partaking of God's bounty, is so often insisted upon in those divine hymns, as a ground of praise to God.

Some do indeed speak of glorifying God for his discriminating grace; as if grace, the narrower it were, the better it were: but is not selfishness and envy at the bottom of this? Is not this the disposition of those in the gospel, who *murmured——is thine eye evil because mine is good?*

It is dangerous to restrain God's benevolence and beneficence within bounds narrower than they really are; thereby diminishing his glory.

2. Hereby is discovered the general obligation of men to love God; to praise him, to serve him in sense of his goodness, in regard to his beneficence, out of gratitude toward him. If God hath been so kindly affected toward men, and so careful of their welfare, as for procuring and promoting their salvation to provide a Saviour for them, to design his own beloved Son to that performance, in prosecution thereof depressing him into so low a state, exposing him to such inconveniences and indignities, such crosses and afflictions, how much are then all men obliged to love him, as their gracious friend and benefactor; to praise and celebrate him for his favour and mercy, to render all blessings and thanks unto him! This certainly is the duty of all, if the redemption in God's design reach to all;[t] otherwise in reality it lieth on few, in practice it could scarce touch any. They cannot be obliged to thank God for their redemption, who are not obliged to him for the thing itself; they cannot heartily resent their kindness, who are not assured that it extends to them: and to such assurance (according to the doctrine of particular redemption) it is certain that very few men, especially of the best men, can arrive; it is a question whether any men arrive thereto.

According to the sense of all men, it is also no easy thing to know certainly whether a man at present be in the state of grace: and he that doth not know that, cannot (except upon the score of general redemption) be assured that he is redeemed; and therefore cannot thank God.

It hath been the common doctrine of Christendom for fifteen hundred years together, that no man (without a special revelation) can in this life be assured of his perseverance, and consequently not of his salvation; and consequently not of his election or redemption, in case only they who are saved are in the design of God redeemed: no man, therefore, without that special revelation, can thank God heartily for his redemption, as being uncertain thereof, it being a secret reserved in God's breast.

It is yet a further difficulty, supposing a man to have a good assurance of his present state, to be assured of his final perseverance in it: which he that hath not, cannot (except upon the said score) thank God for it.

The best men especially, who, out of modesty and humility, are apt to doubt of their present state; who studying their hearts, and discovering many imperfections in themselves; who reflecting on their lives, and observing in them many

[t] Rev. v. 9; Eph. i. 6; Col. i. 12.

defects, are apt to question whether they are qualified for God's favour, or fitted for the future account and enjoyment of heaven; who considering the treachery of their hearts, the feebleness of their reason, that unsteadiness of their resolution, will be apt to fear they may fall away, will be rendered hence uncapable to give God thanks for their redemption: only the bold and blind bayards (who usually out of self conceit are so exceedingly confident of their election and salvation) will be able to praise God for it.

Hence the assurance of salvation happening to few, and of them to much fewer upon good grounds; it being necessary to none, it being perhaps (yet far more probably, according to the general sense of Christendom) groundless to any; few or none are capable to render God praise and thanks for it: so shall he lose in effect all thanks for the greatest benefit he did ever confer on mankind.

It is therefore a dangerous opinion, which checketh their gratitude, which stoppeth their mouths from praising God, which so depriveth God of his due praise. It is much more safe to praise God for the benefits we conceive we have, but have not, than to neglect to praise him for that we have.

3. This doctrine doth afford great matter of comfort. If a man reflecting on his own heart and ways (observing in them many blemishes and defects) is apt to be discouraged, yet it will raise him, to consider that he is not thereby excluded from a possibility of salvation, seeing he is assured of God's favourable inclination, and who hath expressed so much good-will and favour toward him in his redemption; seeing he is persuaded that he hath a Saviour so kindly and pitifully affected toward him; who wisheth him well; who is concerned in his salvation, that he might not be crossed or defeated in his designs, that he might not lose the effects of his endeavours, the price of his blood. But he that seeth himself in so doubtful a condition as to his own qualifications, and withal hath no assurance that God was ever graciously disposed toward him, cannot but thereby be much discouraged.

This doctrine, therefore, is safe and useful; it can do no man harm; it may do him great good, by giving him hopes of being assisted and accepted by his Redeemer. But the other is dangerous, as tending to discourage and deject men.

4. This doctrine is a great incitement to the performance of duty; both as working upon men's ingenuity, and disposing them in gratitude to serve God, from the resentment of their obligation for so great a favour; and as assuring them of acceptance in case of endeavours to obey. How can he but be moved willingly to serve God, who hath an apprehension of God's such merciful design to save him? of his having done so much in order thereto?

But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of such a benefit, who is ignorant of its being intended him? How can any man apply himself cheerfully to serve that master, whose favourable inclination toward him, whose readiness to accept his service, he doubteth of?

The apostles propound it as a ground of gratitude, and an obligation to the performance of duty, that they are redeemed by Christ; which supposeth they do all know and believe it.[n]

Supposing Christ is not the Redeemer of all, but of those only who shall be finally saved, these grounds of thankfulness and enforcements of duty cannot properly or pertinently respect all Christians and indeed only those who are sure of their salvation.

My thanking Christ for his redeeming me, my diligently serving him as my Redeemer, supposeth my opinion, and is grounded upon the truth of his being really so:— I cannot heartily, confidently, or comfortably do it, except I know it, and am assured thereof; which I cannot do, except Christ died for all men, or that I am assured of my particular election.

So that either Christ is an universal Saviour, or the greatest part of Christians are disobliged and incapacitated reasonably to thank him, to praise him, to serve him, as they are enjoined to do.

5. It is a great aggravation of infidelity, of apostacy, of all disobedience, that we are guilty of them, do frustrate the designs and undertakings of Christ, do reject the overtures of his grace, do

[n] 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Pet. i. 17.

abuse the goodness and mercy of their Redeemer; it consequently deterreth from those things.

The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God toward them; (God therefore designed their good.[v])

How shall we escape that neglect so great salvation?[w]—a salvation which they were capable of, which was designed for them, which was offered to them; otherwise there would have been no danger in neglecting it, no fault in doing it.

It is said of the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, that *they did* ἀπωθεῖσθαι, *thrust away the gospel* (*the word of salvation*, that was sent them), *judging themselves unworthy of eternal life:*[x] God did think fit out of goodness seriously to offer it to them, but they did not think fit to embrace it.

Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness?[y] How can any man despise that which doth not concern him, which never was offered him, which at least he hath no ground of confidence that it extendeth to him?

These things I speak that ye may be saved: so our Lord saith to those—— *who did not believe in him.*[z]

How often have I willed, &c.[a]

Denying the Lord that bought them.[b]

6. It is a great encouragement and excitement to devotion. Who can be backward of having recourse to his Redeemer, or of using his mediation? Whom will not such an experiment of goodness invite and encourage?

But the contrary apprehension must needs damp devotion, and discourage from it. He can apply himself to God but faintly and distrustfully, who distrusteth whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediator, or no; who must thus conceive and say to himself: Perhaps God hath loved me, and perhaps he never had nor will have any regard to my welfare. Perhaps Christ died with intention to do me good; perhaps he never did mean any such thing. Perhaps those expressions of kindness sounding so generally do not include me; perhaps I am excluded, and only deluded by them. When a man cannot say to Christ, O my Saviour!—O my Mediator! &c. nor use his intercession with God for the procurement of faith, of grace, of any good thing.

7. It is a ground and motive of charity; there arising thence a more considerable relation between all men; being all the objects of Christ's love and mercy should endear men to one another; it rendereth every man valuable in our eyes, as dear and precious in God's sight. It should make his salvation desirable to us.

Pray for all men, saith St. Paul.

The contrary opinion removeth this ground of charity; and so cooleth it.

8. It should consequently render us careful to promote the salvation of others, and fearful to hinder it by ill example, by ill doctrine, by any misbehaviour. So doth St. Paul argue, when he saith, *Destroyest thou him, for whom Christ died?*

9. It is a piece of justice to acknowledge the right and interest of every man in his Saviour;—

A wrong to exclude any; to confine and appropriate this great blessing; to engross, to inclose a common; to restrain that by forging distinctions, which is so unlimitedly expressed.

The undertakings and performances of our Saviour did respect all men, as the common works of nature do; as the air we breathe in, as the sun which shineth on us; the which are not given to any man particularly, but to all generally; not as a proper inclosure, but as a common: they are indeed mine, but not otherwise than as they do belong to all men.

A gift they are to all equally, though they do not prove to all a blessing; there being no common gift, which by the refusal, neglect, or ill use of it, may not prove a curse—*a savour of death.*

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[v] Luke vii. 30. [w] Heb. ii. 3.
[x] Acts xiii. 26, 46.
[y] 2 Pet. iii. 9; Rom. ii. 4.
[z] John v. 34, 38. [a] Matt. xxiii. 37.
[b] 2 Pet. ii. 1.

SERMON LXXV.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY.

LUKE ii. 10.—*And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.**

THE proper business of a festival is spiritual joy, conceived in our hearts by reflection on some notable blessing conferred on us; accompanied with a grateful sense and expression, answerable to the special bounty and mercy of God, in due proportion to the nature and degree of that blessing.

Such joy is a duty, or a part of religious devotion, required by God, and very acceptable to him: for as God would have his servants perpetually content, well satisfied, and cheerful, in all states and upon all occurrences; so he doth especially demand from us, that we should entertain his favours with delight and complacence;† it being proper, it being seemly, it being just, so to do: for since joy is a natural result of our obtaining whatever we do apprehend good, or esteem and affect, the conception of it is a plain argument that we do well understand, do rightly prize, do cordially like, do thankfully embrace God's favours; as, on the contrary, a defect of it doth imply that we do not mind them, or take them to be little worth; that we do not sensibly relish them, or accept them kindly. And if ever we are obliged, if ever we are concerned so to rejoice, then surely it is now; when the fairest occasion and highest cause of joy that ever was, is presented to us; when certain news from heaven, and the best that ever came from thence, of the most admirable, the most glorious, the most beneficial event that ever happened in the world, is in a manner suitably rare conveyed to us: for, *Behold* (saith the angel) *I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

Upon which words (each whereof is emphatical, and pregnant with matter observable) we shall first make a brief descant, or paraphrase, supplying the room of a curious analysis; then we shall urge the main duty couched in them.

Ἰδοὺ, Behold: This is a word denoting *admiration*, exciting *attention*, intimating *assurance: Behold*, and *admire;* it is no mean, no ordinary matter, that I report, but a most remarkable, a very marvellous event: *Behold*, and *attend;* it is a business not to be passed over with small regard, but most worthy your consideration, of high moment and concernment to you. *Behold* and *see;* it is no uncertain, no obscure thing; but that whereof you may be fully assured, as if it were most evident to your sense, and which by conspicuous proofs shall be demonstrated; in the mean while you have no slight authority for it: for

Εὐαγγελίζομαι, I bring good tidings; *I*, an angel, a special messenger of God purposely sent on this errand, that by the strangeness of my apparition I may excite you to regard it, by the weight of my testimony I may incline you to believe it, by the dignity of my nature I may declare the importance of it; *I*, a faithful servant of God, and a kind friend to men, very willing at his command to perform good offices to them, do bring a message well becoming an angel's mouth, worth my descent from heaven, and putting on this vissible shape: for *I bring*

Εὐαγγελίζομαι χαρὰν μεγάλην, good tidings of great joy: I bring *tidings* that may gratify the curiosity of any man, the mind of man naturally being greedy of news: *good tidings;* those are welcome to all men, and apt to yield more pleasure than any knowledge we had before: tidings *of joy;* such as may not only minister a dry satisfaction to your reason, but sensibly touch your affections, by the comfortable nature and beneficial tendency of them: tidings of *great joy;* as not touching any indifferent or petty business, but affairs of nearest concernment and highest consequence to you: (such, indeed, as you shall understand, which do concern not the poor interests of this world, not the sorry pleasures of sense, not any slender advantage of your present life and temporal state; but your spiritual welfare, your everlasting condition, the future joy and happiness of your souls;) *tidings*, indeed, the most gladsome that ever sounded upon earth,

* Ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην, ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ.

† 1 Thess. v. 16; Rom. xii. 12; Phil. iv. 4.

that ever entered into mortal ear: these *I bring*

Ὑμῖν, *to you:* to you *shepherds;* persons of mean condition and simple capacity, leading this innocent and humble sort of life, employed in your honest vocation, undergoing toilsome labour and sore hardship; witness the open field, witness the cold season, witness the dark night, in which I find you watching and guarding your sheep; to you, who could expect no very welcome tidings; who are little concerned in any great transactions, and can have small ambition or hope of bettering your condition by any changes here;* even to you (not in the first place to the mighty *princes*, to the crafty *statesmen*, to the sage *philosophers*, or learned *rabbis*, to the wealthy *merchants*, or fine *citizens*, who now are warm in their houses, enjoying their ease and pleasure; reposing on their beds, or sitting by their fires, or revelling at their banquets and sports; but to you) poor, harmless, silly, industrious souls, who well may represent the greater and better part of mankind: in this surprising and absolutely free way, the gracious Lord of heaven, by me his special minister, doth vouchsafe to send from thence *tidings of great joy:* which shall be

Παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all people;* or rather to all *the people;* that is, to God's ancient and peculiar people, in regard to which it is said, *I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;* to *that* people, I say, especially, primarily, and more immediately this joy did appertain;[b] it, by a closer relation to God, and special interest in his promises, having plainest title thereto; it, from anticipations of knowledge, faith, and hope, being more capable to admit such an overture; it indeed being the representative of all the spiritual Israel, or faithful seed of Abraham, for whom the benefits which these tidings import were designed; to it first, indeed, but mediately and consequentially to all people dispersed on the face of the earth. The expression seemeth adapted to the present conceits of that nation, which apprehended nothing about God's favourable intentions to the community of men; but in effect it is to be understood extensively in reference to all people: for the Saviour, the Christ, the Lord, of whom this good news did report, was not only to be the Redeemer and Governor of that small people, but of the world, of every nation, of all mankind: here indeed we have παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all the people;* but in the *nunc dimittis* of old Simeon we have πάντων τῶν λαῶν, *of all the peoples: Mine eyes* (saith he) *have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all the peoples:*[c] As he was *the glory of his people Israel;* as in him *God did visit and redeem that his people;* so he was *made a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be for salvation to the uttermost ends of the earth:* he was *the expectation of Israel;* but he was likewise *the desire of all nations:* he was destined *to rule in Sion;* but *the heathen* also *were given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession:*[d] he was *the root of Jesse, which should stand for an ensign of the people, to which the Gentiles should seek;* he was that royal Person of whom the Psalmist did sing, *Men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed.*[e]

He was to be born by nation a Jew, but a man by nature; *the Son of man* was a style which he commonly did own and affect, no less than the *Son of Abraham*, or of *David;* he was *born* indeed *under the law*, but *of a woman;*[f] and therefore brother to us all, as *partaker of the same flesh and blood:*[g] hence was he endued with an human compassion, and with a fraternal affection toward all men; hence was he disposed to extend the benefit of his charitable and gracious performances unto them all.

Judæa, therefore, must not engross this angelical gospel; it is of importance most universal and unlimited, reaching through all successions of time, and all extensions of place; filling all ages and all regions of the world with matter and with obligation of joy: hence even by Moses anciently (according to St. Paul's

* Luke ii. 8,—Pauperibus atque vigilantibus, &c.—*Bern. de Nat. Serm.* 5.

[b] Matt. xv. 24; x. 6; Rom. ix. 4; Luke xxiv. 47; Acts xiii. 46; Isa. ii. 3; Zech. ix. 9; Rom. ix. 4.

[c] Luke ii. 31, 30.

[d] Luke ii. 32; i. 68; Acts xiii. 47; Isa. xlix. 6; Luke ii. 38; Hag. ii. 7; Psal. ii. 8; Mic. v. 2.

[e] Isa. xi. 10; Psal. lxxii. 17.

[f] Gal. iv. 4.

[g] Heb. ii. 14.

interpretation) were all nations upon this account invited to a common joy; *Rejoice* (saith he) *O ye nations with his people.* Hence, in foresight of this event, the holy Psalmist (as the Fathers* expound him) did sing, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of isles be glad thereof:* hence, *Sing, O thou barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child—The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose—Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth*, said the evangelical prophet in regard to this dispensation;[h] in fine, this angel himself did interpret his own words, when in concert with the heavenly choir he sang that anthem, *Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good-will toward men:*[i] whence we may collect that a peace diffused over the earth, and a good-will extended toward all men, were implied in these *tidings of great joy to all people.*

We, then, are all concerned in these *tidings*, and we may look on them as by this heavenly evangelist imparted to us; whence our duty must be to listen with reverent attention unto them, seriously to weigh the purport of them, diligently to contemplate the reasons of that great joy, which effectually should be produced in us by them, as their proper and due result; to further which practice, let us take some prospect of this gospel, whereby it may appear pleasant, and apt to kindle a sprightly joy in our hearts. The matter of it is the nativity of our ever blessed Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus; for, *To you* (saith our angel) *is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;* an occurrence fraught with all the greatest causes of joy imaginable; as importing innumerable, unexpressibly and unconceivably vast advantages thence springing to us.

It doth minister occasion of rejoicing for all the blessings which did flow from each of his salutary undertakings and performances; for all the mercies purchased by the merits of his obedience, and by the price of his blood; for all the graces issuing from his dispensation of the Holy Spirit; for all the benefits consequent on his illustrious resurrection, ascension, and glorification; as being a good entrance to them, yea, a great progress in them, and a certain pledge of their full accomplishment: for all the work of our redemption was in a manner achieved when our Saviour did appear; his incarnation was the great step toward it, as being an act of the humblest obedience, and of the highest merit, that could anywise be performed, for satisfying the justice of God, and winning his favour toward us. His *taking up life* may well seem more meritorious than his *laying it down*, and the chief passion which he could ever undergo; his death was a passion, great as death could be; his life also was a continual passion, or exercise of huge patience: but his birth seemeth to be the greatest and strangest passion of all; involving the lowest submission and the deepest suffering. What nobler sacrifice could there be, than God's offering himself up to mortality, to infirmity, to slavery? What obedience can be thought of, comparable to that which he did express when he said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; I came down not that I might do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.*[j] For him to descend from heaven, the region of light and bliss, into this gloomy and sad world; for him in a manner to divest himself of celestial majesty, and to assume the form of a servant; for him to be enclosed in a womb, and to come out wailing thence, to suck at a breast for life, to be carried in arms, and laid in a manger, to enter on a stage of being so very low and homely; for him, I say, *the Lord of glory*, thus *to empty* and *abase* himself;[k]* may not this reasonably be deemed more than, after his becoming man, to sustain all the grievances incident to our nature and state? Whence *the very assumption of flesh* was (saith St. Athanasius) *the re-*

* Τὴν προτέραν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἐπιφάνειαν προλέγει. —Theod.

Totum ad Christum revocemus, si volumus iter rectæ intelligentiæ tenere.—*Aug. in Ps.* xcvi. 7.

[h] Rom. xv. 10; Deut. xxxii. 43; Psal. xcvii. 1; xcvi. 1; Isa. liv. 1; xxxv. 1; xlii. 10.

[i] Luke ii. 14.

* Ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, ἑαυτὸν ἐταπείνωσεν.

[j] Heb. x. 7; John vi. 38.

[k] Phil. ii. 7, 8.

*demption of all mankind.** He was at least thence engaged in the way of acting and suffering whatever was needful for our recovery; and having gone so far, assuredly he never would flinch or recoil, but would go through with all; being come, he would show himself come to purpose, leaving no part unfinished of his grand design.

So that as they, who celebrate the birth of a prince, do mean thereby to express their joy for all the good which they do hopefully presume to enjoy from his protection and conduct afterward in all his life; and as they who welcome the sunrising do imply their satisfaction in the conveniences of his light through the whole ensuing day; so may the nativity of our Lord afford matter of rejoicing for all the train of mighty blessings which do succeed it. We may therefore now well consider him born to instruct us by his excellent doctrine, and to guide us by his perfect example; born to merit God's mercy and favour toward us, by an entire submission to God's pleasure in the whole conduct of his life, and in the final resignation of it; born to renew and sanctify our nature, to support and strengthen us in obedience to God's commandments, to succour us in temptations, to comfort us in distresses by his grace; born to rear himself from the grave for confirming our faith, and ensuring our hopes of salvation; born to ascend up above all the heavens to God's right hand, there effectually to intercede for us, thence liberally to dispense all heavenly blessings to us. Well may we now rejoice, as seeing him come to disclose the way of happiness, to establish the covenant of grace, to void all the obstructions, and subdue all the enemies to our welfare: well may we celebrate this birth, as by its virtue blessing the patriarchs, enlightening the prophets, inspiring the martyrs with faith and courage, enduing all the saints, that ever have been, with grace, and crowning them with glory; so that in this day we have the passion, the *pasch*, the ascension, the pentecost, the memorials of every saint suggested to us;* the joys of all our festivals do conspire or commence in this; which is the head and spring, which is the fruitful seed, which is the hopeful morning of them all. *Πάντα ταῦτα τῆς παρούσης ἡμέρας χάρις ἐστιν· αὕτη γὰρ ἦρξε τῶν ἐφεξῆς ἀγαθων. All these things* (saith St. Gregory Nyssen) *are the grace of this present day, for it began the goods which did in order succeed.*[1]

But waiving the numberless benefits so consequent on the nativity, we shall only touch some of those which have a more formal and close relation thereto.

I pass over the contemplation of that sweet harmony between the old and the new world; in which, to our comfortable satisfaction, the sweetest attributes of God (his goodness, his wisdom, his fidelity and constancy) do illustrate themselves, by completion of the ancient promises, prefigurations, and predictions touching this event.

I forbear also to reflect on the happy alteration and amendment of the world, which our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it with that which followed it; the consideration of which case is very pleasant, and productive of joy. First, then,

1. Let us consider, that the nativity doth import the completion of many ancient promises, predictions, and prefigurations concerning it; that whereas all former dispensations of favour and mercy were as preludes or preambles to this; the old law did aim to represent it in its mysterious pomps; the chief of providential occurrences did intimate it; the prophets often in their mystical raptures did allude to it, and often in clear terms did express it;† the gracious designs of God, and the longing expectations of mankind, being so variously implied in regard thereto: now all is come to be fulfilled, and perfected in most clear, most

* Ἡ πρόσληψις τῆς σαρκὸς ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν πάσην τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος.—Ath. Or. 3, c. Arr. p. 385, *vide* p. 618.

Λόχνον ἦψε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σάρκα, &c.—Gr. Naz. Or. 38

Creatoris ad creaturam descensio credentium est ad æterna provectio.—*Leo M. de Nat. Serm.* 5.

* Οὐκοῦν καὶ τὰ τοῦ Πάσχα καλὰ τῶν περὶ τὴν γένεσιν εὐφημιῶν μέρος ἐστι.—Greg. Nyss.

† Sapientia et benignitas Dei ac salutiferi operis mora capaciores nos suæ vocationis effecit, ut quod multis signis, multis vocibus, multisque mysteriis per tot fuerat secula pronunciatum, in his diebus evangelii non esset ambiguum, &c. *Leo P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

[1] Greg. Nyss. tom. ii. p. 784.

effectual, most substantial accomplishment; now is sprung up that *seed of the woman*, which, according to the first gospel preached to Adam, should *bruise the serpent's head*;[m] now is the mystical Isaac, the miraculous *Son of promise*, born; now is that grant to Abraham, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, made good; now is *Shiloh come*, of whom Jacob foreboded, *unto him the gatherings of the people shall be;* now is that oracle of Moses more than verified, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like to me; him shall ye hear;* now *the Star is come out of Jacob*, the vision whereof dazzled Balaam, and stopped him from cursing that people, in which it should arise;[n] now is that oath discharged to David, *Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne;* now those illustrious predictions of Isaiah, *There shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse—A virgin shall conceive and bear a son; to us a child is born, to us a son is given: and the government shall be on his shoulders—There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob,* are fully accomplished; now *the righteous Branch*, of which Jeremiah and Zechariah spake, is sprouted forth; and Ezekiel's *One Shepherd;* Daniel's *Son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven;* Micah's *Ruler in Israel, whose going forth have been from of old;* Haggai's *Desire of all nations;* Malachi's *Angel of the covenant*, and *Sun of righteousness*, have all in truth appeared: now is that glorious *King* and *Captain* arrived, whom the holy oracles do so magnificently describe;[o] whom Moses and Joshua, whom David and Solomon, in so many pat circumstances did foreshadow; whom God would *set upon his holy hill of Sion; the sceptre of whose kingdom is a mighty sceptre:* who should *raise the tabernacle of David that is fallen: before whom all kings should fall down, and whom all nations should serve: who should reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of whose kingdom there shall be no end.*[p]

Now what can be more delightful, or satisfactory to our mind, than to reflect on this sweet harmony of things, this goodly correspondence between the old and new world; wherein so pregnant evidences of God's chief attributes (of his goodness, of his wisdom, of his fidelity, and constancy), all conspiring to our benefit, do shine? Is it not pleasant to contemplate how provident God hath ever been for our welfare? what trains from the world's beginning, or ever since our unhappy fall, he hath been laying to repair and restore us? how wisely he hath ordered all dispensations with a convenient reference and tendency to this masterpiece of grace?* how steady he hath been in prosecuting his designs, and how faithful in accomplishing his promises concerning it?

If the *holy patriarchs did see this day, and were glad;* if a glimpse thereof did cause their hearts *to leap*[q] within them; if its very dawn had on the spirits of the prophets so vigorous an influence,† what comfort and complacence should we feel in this its real presence, and bright aspect on us! How sensibly should we be affected with this our happy advantage above them; the which our Lord himself then did teach us to estimate duly, when he said, *Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear: for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*[r]

2. Let us consider what alteration our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it, to that which

[m] Gen. iii. 15.

[n] Gen. xxii. 18; Gal. iii. 8, 16; Gen. xlix. 10; Deut. xviii. 15; Acts iii. 22; vii. 37; Num. xxiv. 17.

[o] Psal. cxxxii. 11; Luke i. 33; Isa. xi. 1; vii. 14; ix. 6; lix. 20; Rom. xi. 26; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15; Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; Dan. vii. 13; Mic. v. 2; Matt. ii. 6; Hag. ii. 7; Mal. iii. 1; iv. 2.

* Non itaque novo consillio Deus rebus humanis, nec sere miseratione consuluit, sed a constitutione mundi unam eandemque omnibus causam salutis instituit.—*Leo P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

† Magnam enim jucunditatem tunc carpebant ipsi sancti prophetæ, cum ea videbant in spiritu, non jam impleta, sed adhuc futura.—*Aug. in Ps.* xcvi.

[p] Psal. ii. 6; xlv. 6; lxxii. 11; Acts xv. 16; Amos ix. 11; Luke i. 33; Dan. vii. 13; Mic. iv. 7; Aug. in Psal. xcvi.

[q] John viii. 56—Ἠγαλλιάσατο.

[r] Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

followed it.[s] The old world then consisting of two parts, severed by a strong wall of partition, made up of difference in opinion, in practice, in affection, together with a strict prohibition to one of holding intercourse with the other.[t]

Of one, and that far the greater part, St. Paul hath given us these descriptions and characters: *They were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenant, having no hope, and being without God in the world;* they were *by nature the children of wrath and disobedince;* they were *dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience;* they did *walk in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and being past feeling, did give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness;* they *had their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind;* being *foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*[u] Such was the case, the dismally wretched case of the Gentile world; such were our forefathers (such after them of course, by fatal consequence should we have been; they were in their minds blinded with gross ignorance, and deluded with foul errors; they were in their wills and affections corrupted with great disorder, perverseness, sensuality, malice; they did in their conversation practice all sorts of impiety, iniquity, and impurity; their conceptions of God were very unworthy, and their worship answerably such (full of sottish, savage, beastly superstitions;) their principles were vain, and their life conformably dissolute; in short, they lived under the domination and influence of wicked spirits, who thence are styled *lords* and *princes of this world, of this air, of this secular darkness;*[v] even of the wisest among them (the number of whom, notwithstanding the clatter their writings made, was very small and inconsiderable), of those who by the conduct of natural light strove to disengage themselves from vulgar mistakes and miscarriages, the case was little better; for even their minds (after all their studious disquisitions and debates) proved dark and giddy; full of ignorance, of error, of doubt in regard to the main points of religion and of morality; some of them flatly denying the existence, or (which in effect is the same) the providence of God; the natural distinction between good and evil, the spiritual nature and future subsistence of our souls, the dispensation of rewards and punishments after this life; others wavering in doubt, or having but faint persuasions about these matters; few or none having clear notions, or steady opinions about any such things; whence their practice, in correspondence to their rules, must needs have been very loose, or very lame; so that well might our apostle say of them, *They became vain in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves wise, they became fools; and as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.*[w]

As for the other part, or little parcel of men, the condition of that was also very low; if the rest of the world did lie in dark night, they did live but in a dusky twilight; their religion was much wrapt up in shadow and mystery;[x] they had but dilute ideas of God's nature, and scant discoveries of his will; their law or rule of practice in divers respects was defective and infirm; they were locked under the discipline of childish rudiments, suiting their caw capacities, and under the bondage of slavish yokes, befitting their stubborn dispositions;[y] which defailances in notion their practice commonly did outstrip; being fond, corrupt, hypocritical, void of interior, substantial,

[s] Eph. ii. 14. [t] Acts x. 28.

[u] Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3, 12; iv. 17, 18, 19; Tit. iii. 3; Col. iii. 7; (Eph. v. 8; Col. ii. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 4; 1 Thess. iv. 5; 1 Pet. iv. 3; Gal. iv. 8; Rom. i. 29.)

[v] Eph. vi. 12; ii. 2; (John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 16; Col. i. 13; ii. 15; Acts xxvi. 18.

[w] Rom. i. 21-28.

[x] Col. ii. 17; Heb. viii. 5; x. 1.

[y] Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iii. 21; Heb. vii. 18, 19.

and genuine righteousness; as the old prophets did often complain, and as our Lord, with his apostles, did urge.

Such was the state of the world in its parts; and jointly of the whole it may be said, that it was *shut up under sin*[a] and guilt, under darkness and weakness, under death and corruption, under sorrow and wo: that no full declaration of God's pleasure, no clear overture of mercy, no express grant of spiritual aid, no certain redemption from the filth or the force of sin, from the stroke of death, from due punishment hereafter; no encouragements suitable to high devotion, or strict virtue, were anywise in a solemn way exhibited or dispensed before our Lord's appearance: so that well might all men be then represented as Cimmerians, *sitting in darkness, in the region and shadow of death;*[a] well may we suppose all ages foregoing to have teemed with hope and desire of this happy day; or that, as St. Paul saith, *the whole creation* (that is, all mankind) *groaneth together, and travaileth together until now;*[b] as labouring with pangs of implicit desire, or under a painful sense of needing a Saviour; well might Isaiah thus proclaim his coming: *Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the land, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising:*[c] for, now, *the Lord hath made known his salvation, his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth do see the salvation of our God.*[d]

Now *we are all children of the light, and of the day;* all *do know God from the least to the greatest;*[e] the rarest, the deepest notions are grown common and obvious; every child is instructed in the highest truths, every peasant is become a great philosopher (beyond Aristotle, or Plato, or Epictetus), skilful of the best knowledge, able to direct his life in the best way, capable of obtaining the best good.

Now the Spirit of God (the Spirit of direction, of succour, of comfort spiritual) is poured upon all flesh.[f] *Now the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men;*[g] fully instructing them in their duty, and strongly enabling them to perform it, freely offering them mercy, mightily encouraging them with hopes of most blessed rewards.

Now Jew and Gentile are reunited and compacted in one body; walking in the same light, and under obligation to the same laws;[h] sharing in a common redemption and inheritance; being inseparably linked together with the bands of faith, of charity, of spiritual fraternity; thus *old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new,*[i] in virtue and consequence of our Lord's appearance: in contemplation of which so great, so general, so happy a change, how can we forbear to rejoice?

But further, that we may yet more nearly touch the point,

3. Let us consider that the nativity of our Lord is a grand instance, a pregnant evidence, a rich earnest of Almighty God's very great affection and benignity toward mankind: for, *In this* (saith St. John) *the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world:* and, *Through the tender mercies of our God,* (sang old Zechariah) *the dayspring from on high did visit us:*[j] this indeed is the peculiar experiment, wherein that most divine attribute did show and signalize itself. The power of God doth brightly shine in the creation, the wisdom of God may clearly be discerned in the government of things: but the incarnation of God is that work, is that dispensation of grace, wherein the divine goodness doth most conspicuously display itself. How indeed possibly could God have demonstrated a greater excess of kindness toward us, than by thus, for our sake and good, sending his dearest Son out of his bosom into this sordid and servile state, subjecting him to all the infirm-

[a] Gal. iii 22; Rom. xi. 32; iii. 9, 19.
[a] Isa. ix. 1; Matt. iv. 16.
[b] Rom. viii. 22.
[c] Isa. lx. 1, 2, 3.
[d] Psal. xcviii. 2, 3.
[e] 1 Thess. v. 5; (2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 6;) Heb. viii. 11; Jer. xxxi. 34.
[f] Acts ii. 17; Joel ii. 28.
[g] Tit. ii. 11; Luke xxiv. 47.
[h] Eph iii. 6; ii. 15.
[i] 2 Cor. v. 17; Heb. ix. 10.
[j] 1 John iv. 9; John iii. 16, 17; Eph. ii. 4; Luke i. 78.

ities of our frail nature, exposing him to the worst inconveniences of our low condition?* What expressions can signify, what comparisons can set out, the stupendous vastness of this kindness?[k] If we should imagine, that a great prince should put his only son (a son most lovely, and worthily most beloved) into rags, should dismiss him from his court, should yield him up into the hardest slavery, merely to the intent that he thereby might redeem from captivity the meanest and basest of his subjects, how faint a resemblance would this be of that immense goodness, of that incomparable mercy, which in this instance the King of all the world hath declard toward us his poor vassals, his indeed unworthy rebels!

And what greater reason of joy can there be, than such an assurance of his love, on whose love all our good dependeth, in whose love all our felicity consisteth? What can be more delightful than to view the face of our Almighty Lord so graciously smiling upon us?

Should we not be extremely glad, should we not be proud, if our earthly prince by any signal mark would express himself kindly affected to us? How much more should we resent such a testimony of God's favour! how worthily may our souls be transported with a sense of such affection!

4. We may consider our Lord's nativity, as not only expressing simple goodwill, but implying a perfect reconciliation, a firm peace, a steady friendship established between God and us; or that it did not only proceed from love, but did also produce love to us. We did stand at a great distance, in estrangement, yea in enmity toward God; our first parents had by presumptuous disobedience revolted from him; and we, insisting on the footsteps of their apostacy, continued in defiance of him; *All men had sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God—There was not a righteous man upon the earth, that did good, and sinned not:*[l] whence unavoidably the wrath of the most holy God was incensed, the justice of the most righteous Lord was engaged against us; thence did issue a sad doom, thence a just sentence of capital punishment was denounced on us; no pretence of favour, no overture of peace, no hope of redress, did then appear: we nowise being able to expunge our guilt, to repair our offences, to recover out of that corruption in mind and will, which did seal us up to ruin, indisposing us either to find or to entertain mercy: but our Lord's coming did appease that anger, did mollify that justice, did suspend that condemnation, did close the breach, and *slay the enmity; God* (as the apostle speaketh) *sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, did condemn sin in the flesh:*[m] for, how can God now avert his face from us, whom his only dear Son hath vouchsafed to make and own for his brethren? How can he look with an eye of displeasure on that nature, wherewith that Son of his love standeth clothed before him? How can he abide offended with our race, in which pure innocence and perfect obedience are found;† he now appearing with us, and for us, in whom not the strictest justice nor the shrewdest malice can descry any fault or blemish; *in whom* therefore *God is* thoroughly *well pleased?* Since we have *Emmanuel, God with us—God manifested in our flesh—The Lord our righteousness*, partaker of our infirmity, intercessor and advocate for his own flesh and blood, ready to do and suffer whatever God pleaseth to require on our behalf,

* Apparuerat ante potentia in rerum creatione, apparebat sapientia in earum gubernatione; sed benignitas misericordiæ nunc maxime apparuit in humanitate.—*Bern. de Nat. Serm.* 1.

Semper quidem diversis modis, multisque mensuris humano generi bonitas divina consuluit, et plurima providentiæ suæ munera omnibus retro seculis clementer impertiit; sed in novissimis temporibus omnem abundantiam solitæ benignitatis excessit; quando in Christo ipsa ad peccatores misericordia, ipsa ad errantes veritas, ipsa ad mortuos vita descendit, &c. —*P. Leo M. de Nat. Serm.* 4.

[k] Psal. xxxvi. 6; cviii. 4.

* Ἀδύνατον γέγονε τῇ φύσει λογικῇ οὔσῃ, καὶ ἑκουσίως ἁμαρτησάσῃ, καὶ ὑπὸ καταδίκην θανάτου γινομένῃ, ἑαυτὴν ἀνακαλέσασθαι εἰς ἐλευθερίαν.—Ath. p. 638.

Ἀδύνατον ἑτέρως τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀναμάρτητον ἐπ' ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως παραδεχθῆναι, εἰ μὴ θεὸς ἐν σαρκὶ πιστεύοιτο εἶναι, ὁ τὴν ἀναμάρτητον δικαιοσύνην εἰς κόσμον εἰσαγαγών, &c.—Ath. de Incarn. Verbi.

† Τὸ τοῦ Ἀδὰμ σύμπτωμα εἰς ἀσύγκριτον ἀνάστημα Χριστὸς ἀνεστήσατο, ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας ὀφθεὶς, καὶ κατακρίνας τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί.—Ath. p. 620.

Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτησάσῃ φύσει ἡ ἀναμαρτησία ὤφθη, πῶς κατεκρίθη ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῇ σαρκί; Id. p. 368.

[l] Rom. iii. 23; ix. 23; Gal. iii. 21; Eccles. vii. 20; Leo de Nat. Serm. 2.

[m] Eph. ii. 15, 16; Rom. viii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 19.

how can God be against us?[n] Shall God and man persist at distance or disaffection, who are so closely related, who are indeed so intimately united in one person? Shall heaven and earth retain enmity, which have so kindly embraced and kissed each other; since *truth hath sprouted from the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven?*[o] Shall the war go on, when the great Mediator and Umpire of peace is come; *preaching peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are near?*[p] Can death any longer reign over us, or our disgrace and misery continue, now that *the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, the Captain of salvation,*[q] doth appear for our relief?

Now, then, what can be more worthy of joy, than such a blessed turn of affairs? How can we otherwise than with exceeding gladness solemnize such a peace —a peace accorded with him, who in forces so infinitely doth overmatch us; who at his pleasure can utterly quell us; who with the greatest ease, with less than a word of his mouth, can dash us to nothing, or hurl us down into an abyss of remediless woe: how can we avoid being extremely satisfied at the recovery of his favour and friendship, which alone can be the foundation of our safety and welfare, which is the sole fountain of all good, of all comfort, of all felicity?

5. Our Lord's nativity, doth infer a great honour, and a high preferment to us: nowise indeed could mankind be so dignified, or our nature so advanced as hereby: no wisdom can devise a way beyond this whereby God should honour his most special favourites, or promote them to a nearness unto himself.[r] For hence we become allied to God in a most strait affinity, his eternal Son being made our brother: hence as touching the blood-royal of heaven we do in dignity o'ertop all the creation;* so that what the Psalmist uttered concerning man is verified in the most comprehensive sense: *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet:*[s] for now the son of man, being also the son of God, is *the head of all principality and power*, is *the Lord of all things*, is the sovereign prince of all the world, is placed *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.*[t] This is a peculiar honour, to which the highest angels cannot pretend; for *he took not the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham;*[u] whence those noble creatures are become in a manner inferior to poor us; and, according to just obligation, willingly do adore our nature; for, *when God brought his first begotten Son into the world, he said Let all the angels of God worship him.*[v] Is not indeed our flesh become adorable, as the true Shechinah, as the everlasting palace of the supreme Majesty, *wherein the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily;*† as the most holy shrine of the Divinity; as the orb of *inaccessible light;* as more than all this, if more could be expressed, or if we could expound that text, *the word was made flesh, and dwelt in us?*[w] May not our soul worthily claim the highest respect, all whose faculties (being endued with unmeasurable participations of the Holy Spirit) have been tuned to a perfect harmony with the all-wise understanding and the most pure will of God? yea, which hath been admitted into the nearest consortship, into the strictest union, with the eternal Word; hath become an ingredient of him who is *the wisdom and the power of God?*[x] It was a great dignity that man should be made according to the image of God; but is a more sublime glory that God should be made after the image of man, κατὰ πάντα ὁμοιωθεὶς, *being made like to us in all things,*[y] bating only sin, which is no part of us, but an unnatural excrescence, or a deflection from our nature:†

* (Ἡνωμένος πατρὶ κατὰ πνεῦμα, ἡμῖν δὲ κατὰ σάρκα.—Ath. p. 612.)

[n] (1 Pet. i. 19; Heb. vii. 26;) John xiv. 30, ἐν ἐμοὶ οὐκ ἔχει οὐδέν.—John xix. 6, οὐχ εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.—Matt. iii. 17; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16.

[o] Psal. lxxxv. 11.

[p] Isa. ix. 6; Acts x. 36; Eph. ii. 17.

[q] 1 Cor. ii. 8.

[r] Eph. iii. 10, 19.

* Col. ii. 9,—Totum corpus implet tota divinitas.—*Leo de Nat. Serm.* 10.

† Qui cum origini humanæ multum dederit, quod nos ad imaginem suam fecit, reparationi

[s] Psal. viii. 5, 6; Heb. ii. 7.

[t] Col. ii. 10; Eph. ii. 22; Acts x. 36; Eph. i. 21; Phil. ii. 9; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

[u] Heb. ii. 16.

[v] Heb. i. 6.

[w] John i. 14; iii. 34.

[x] 1 Cor. i. 24.

[y] Heb. ii. 17.

how could we be so raised up to God, as by his thus stooping down to us? What can be imagined more honourable to us, than that God should deem us worthy of such condescension? This, this indeed, is our exaltation, that God for us should express not only so vast charity, but so prodigious humility.

And is it not good matter of joy to be thus highly graced?* When are men better pleased than when they are preferred; than, especially, when from the meanest state, *from the dunghill*, or *from the dust*, they *are raised to be set among princes*, and *made to inherit the throne of glory*?[z] Wherefore, this being our case, that we sons of earth, *children of corruption* and *brethren of worms*[a] (in Job's style;) we exiles of paradise, we heirs of death and misery; we, that by our nature are the lowest of all intelligent creatures, that by our merits were debased *beneath the beasts that perish*,[b] that we are assumed to such relations, that we are ennobled to such a pitch, that our nature hath mounted so high above all creatures, with what enlargement of heart should we entertain a dispensation so wonderful! how welcome should that day be, which doth introduce it!†

6. Finally, if we survey all principal causes of joy and special exhultation, we shall find them all concurring in this event.

Is a messenger of good news embraced with joy? Behold, the great Evangelist is come, with his mouth full of news, most admirable, most acceptable: he, who doth acquaint us that God is well pleased, that man is restored, that *the adversary is cast down*,[c] that paradise is set open, and immortality retrieved; that truth and righteousness, peace and joy, salvation and happiness, are descended, and come to dwell on earth; he of whom the prophet told, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth;*[d] he who doth himself thus declare the drift and purport of his message: *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord; to comfort all that mourn.*[e]

Is the birth of a prince by honest subjects to be commemorated with joyous festivity? Behold a prince born to all the world![f] a Prince undertaking to rule mankind with sweetest clemency and exact justice; a Prince bringing with him all peace and prosperity; *in whose days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely;*[g] who shall protect us in assured rest and safety; shall secure us from all danger and mischief; shall achieve most gallant and glorious exploits in our behalf; shall vanquish all the enemies of our welfare; shall rescue us from the worst slaveries and mischiefs; shall settle us in a most free and happy state: he *who bringeth salvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us;* that, *being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.*[h] Now therefore it is seasonable to cry out, *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.*[i]

May victory worthily beget exultation? See, the invincible Warrior doth issue forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer:* he that shall baffle and rifle *the strong one*, our formidable adversary; that shall rout all the forces of hell, and *triumph over* all the powers of darkness;[j] that utterly shall defeat sin, and slay

nostræ longe amplius tribuit, cum servili formæ ipse se Dominus coaptavit.—*Leo de Nat. Serm.* 4.

* Exultent ergo in laudem Dei corda credentium, et mirabilia ejus confiteantur filii hominum, quoniam in hoc præcipue Dei opere humilitas nostra cognoscit, quanti eam suus conditor æstimarit.—*Leo, Serm.* 4.

† Hic infirmitatis nostræ suscipiens conditionem, propter quos ad inferna descendit, eosdem in cœlestibus collocavit.—*Leo de Nat.* 5.

[z] Psal. cxiii. 7, 8; 1 Sam. ii. 8.
[a] Job xvii. 14. [b] Psal. xlix. 12.
[c] Rev. xii. 10; John xiv. 30; Luke x. 18.
[d] Isa. lii. 7; Nah. i. 15; Rom. x. 15.
[e] Isa. lxi. 1, 2; Luke iv. 18, 19.
[f] Isa. xi. 2; Psal. xlv. & lxxii.
[g] Jer. xxiii. 6. [h] Luke i. 71, 74, 75.
[i] Rev. xix. 6, 7; xi. 15.
[j] Isa. ix. 3; Rev. vi. 2; Luke xi. 22; Col. ii. 15; (John vi. 33.)

death itself; that shall subdue the world, and lay all things prostrate at his feet; behold the *Captain of our salvation*, arrayed with glorious humility, and armed with a mighty patience; see, the great blow is struck, at which the infernal powers do stagger; the Devil's pride and envy are abased, all the enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his presence; they cannot stand, they break, they scatter, they flee before him.[k]

Is a proclamation of peace, after rueful wars, to be solemnized with alacrity? Behold, then, everlasting peace between heaven, and earth, a general peace among men, a sound peace between each good man and himself are settled and published;[l] the illustrious herald, the noblest hostage of them is arrived; *the Prince of peace* himself doth bring all peace unto us.[m]

Is satisfaction of desire and hope very pleasant? Behold, the *desire of all nations, the expectation of Israel*, he for whom the whole creation groaned, is come.

Is recovery of liberty delectable to poor slaves and captives? Behold, the *Redeemer is come out of Sion;* the precious ransom, sufficient to purchase the freedom of many worlds, is laid down; unblemished innocence, purity, and perfection, appearing in human nature, have procured a releasement for us; have unlocked the prison of sin detaining us, have knocked off the shackles of guilt sorely pinching and galling our consciences;[n] have wrested us from the hands of those proud masters, who claimed a right, who exercised a most tyrannous power over us;* he is come, that *proclaimeth liberty to the captives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound;* the time is come, of which the prophet foretold, *The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*[o]

Is an overture of health acceptable to sick and languishing persons?[p] Behold, the great Physician, endued with admirable skill, and furnished with infallible remedies, is come, to cure us of our maladies, and ease us of our pains;[q] to bind up our wounds, and to pour in balm (the most sovereign balm of his own blood) into them; to free us, not only from all mortiferous diseases, but from mortality itself: he who was *sent to bind up and heal the broken hearted;* he who *himself took our infirmities, and bare our sickness;*[r] he of whom the prophet (in relation to corporal, and much more to spiritual infirmities) did foretell;—*God will come and save you, then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing;*[s] he, whose art no disease can resist, who is able to cure our most desperate, our most inveterate distempers; to heal the corruption and impotency of our nature, to void the ignorances and errors of our understanding, to correct the stupidity of our hearts, the perverseness of our wills, the disorder of our affections, to mitigate our anguish of conscience, and cleanse our sores of guilt;[t] by various efficacious medicines, by the wholesome instructions of his doctrine, by the powerful inspirations of his grace, by the refreshing comforts of his Spirit, by the salutary virtue of his merits and sufferings.

Is mirth seasonable on the day of marriage? Behold, the greatest wedding that ever was is this day solemnized; heaven and earth are contracted; divinity is espoused to humanity; a sacred, an indissoluble knot is tied between God and man; *The Bridegroom is come forth out of his chamber*[u] (*Verbum Dei de utero virginali*), clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, and ready to wed the church, his

* Nam superbia hostis antiqui non immerito sibi in omnes homines jus tyrannicum vindicabat; nec indebito dominatu premebat, quos a mandato Dei spontaneos in obsequium suæ voluntatis allexerat.—*Leo de Nat., Serm.* 2.

[k] 1 John iii. 8; Rom. xvi. 20.

[l] Eph. ii. 17.

[m] (Isa. lvii. 2;) Acts x. 36; Isa. ix. 6.

[n] (Gal. iii. 22.)

[o] Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18; Isa. xxxv. 10;

[p] Luke x. 33; Matt. ix. 12.

[q] 1 Pet. ii. 24.

[r] Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18; Isa. liii. 4; Matt. viii. 17.

[s] Isa. xxxv. 4, 5, 6; Matt. xi. 5; Luke v. 17; (John xii. 40; Acts x. 38; Luke x. 34.)

[t] (Ezek. xxxvi 26; Eph. ii. 10.)

[u] Joel ii. 16.

beloved spouse;* *Let us therefore be glad and rejoice; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*[v]

Is the access of a good friend to be received with cheerful gratulation? Behold, the dearest and best Friend of all mankind (most able, most willing, most ready to perform all good offices, to impart wholesome advice, needful aid, sweet converse, and seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, to sojourn with us, to dwell in us for ever.

Is opportune relief grateful to persons in forlorn condition, pinched with extreme want, or plunged in any hard distress? Behold a merciful, a bountiful, a mighty Saviour and succourer, undertaking *to comfort all that mourn*, inviting all such to receive from him a plentiful supply for their needs, a comfortable ease in their pressures, a happy riddance from their calamities; who *crieth* aloud, *If any one thirsteth let him come to me and drink; Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*[w]

Is the sun-rising comfortable, after a tedious, darksome, and cold night? See, *the Sun of righteousness is risen with healing in his wings*,[x] dispensing all about his pleasant rays and kindly influences: *The dayspring from on high hath visited us;*[y] diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, whereby the night of ignorance is dispelled, the spectres of error are vanished, the mists of doubt are scattered; whereby we clearly and assuredly discern all truths of importance to us, and worthy of our knowledge; concerning the nature and attributes, the works and providence, the will and pleasure of God; concerning ourselves, our nature and original, our duty and interest, our future state, and final doom: *Our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon us; the light of the world, the true light, enlightening every man,* by whose lustre *all flesh may see the salvation of God*, and *which guideth our feet in the way of peace*,[z] doth visibly shine forth upon us.

Never indeed did heaven with so fair and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as then it did, when this (ἀστὴρ λαμπρὸς καὶ ὀρθρινὸς) *bright and morning star*[a] did spring up above our horizon, bringing this goodly day; and with it shedding life and cheer among us.

From this auspicious day did commence the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were expelled from paradise, adjudged to death, and committed to hell; from thence we became reinstated in a condition of hope, and in a fair capacity of happiness; from thence is to be dated a return of joy into this region of disconsolateness. In this nativity mankind was born, or did revive from manifold deaths; from a legal, a moral, a natural, an eternal death; from lying dead in irreparable guilt, and under an insuperable power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second* more ghastly *death* of perpetual incurable anguish.

It is in effect therefore the birthday of the world; the beginning of a new, better, eternal life to men (offered to all, and effectually bestowed on those who will embrace it), which we now do celebrate.* All reason, therefore, we have to rejoice most heartily and most abundantly: as the goods thence accruing to us are in multitude innumerable, in quality inestimable, in duration immense; so in some correspondence should our joy be very intense, very effuse, very stable; the contemplation of them should infuse somewhat of that *unspeakable joy*, whereof St. Peter speaketh; we should *be filled*, according to St. Paul's expression, *with all joy and peace in believing* them; we should *hold fast*, as the apostle to the Hebrews adviseth,

* In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsæ suæ ecclesiæ Christus adjunctus est—tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est, Verbum Dei de utero virginali.—*Aug. de temp. Serm.* 2.

Ἡ πασταὶς ἐν ᾗ ὁ λόγος ἐνυμφεύσατο τὴν σάρκα.—Procl. in Eph. p. 1.

[v] Rev. xix. 7.

[w] Ἔκραξε.—John vii. 37; Isa. lv. 1; xliv. 3; Matt. xi. 28.

[x] Mal. iv. 2.

[y] Luke i. 78.

* It is the birthday of the church. Generatio enim Christi origo est populi Christiani, et natalis capitis natalis est corporis.—*P. Leo de Nat. Serm.* 6.

Sicut cum Christo in passione crucifixi, in resurrectione resuscitati, in ascensione ad dextram Patris collocati, ita cum ipso sumus in hac nativitate congeniti.—*Ibid.*

[z] Isa. lx. 1; John viii. 12; ix. 5; i. 9; Luke iii. 6; i. 79.

[a] Rev. xxii. 16.

the confidence and rejoicing of hope, grounded on them, *firm to the end.*[b]

Having so many, so great causes of joy, are we not very stupid, are we not strangely cross and perverse, if we neglect so pleasant a duty?

To conclude: Of all the days that rise upon us, this undoubtedly is the queen, crowned by God's own hand with sovereign blessings; God hath avowed it to be the day of his peculiar making, and therefore of our special rejoicing; for thus of old the inspired Psalmist did teach and exhort us to keep Christmas: *This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.*[c]

SERMON LXXVI.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FORETOLD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

ACTS iii. 18.—*But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

MANY good arguments there are, different in kind, which conspire to persuade the truth of our religion; such as are the intrinsic reasonableness, excellency, and perfection of its doctrine; the miraculous works performed in attestation thereto; the special favour of Providence declared in the support and propagation thereof: but upon no other ground do the scriptures so much build its truth, and our obligation to embrace it, as upon the exact correspondence and conformity thereof to all the ancient scriptures, which did foreshow or foretell its revelation and introduction into the world; to those especially which described the personal characters, circumstances, and performances of our Lord. To this our Lord, in his discourses and disputes with incredulous people, referred them: *Search the scriptures* (said he), *because in them ye expect to have eternal life*[d] (that is, to find the true way of saving truth leading thereto;) *and those are they which testify of me:* by this he instructed and convinced his disciples: *beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself:* and, *These* (said he to them presently before his departure) *are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me;*[e] this the apostles, in all their preaching (whereby they taught, proved, and persuaded the Christian doctrine), did chiefly insist upon; *Moses* (saith St. Peter) *truly said unto the fathers, yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days;*[f] and, *To him* (saith he again) *give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* And of St. Paul it is said, that *he mightily convinced the Jews—showing by the scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ;* and—*he expounded, and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets:*[g] thus the chief apostles and founders of our religion in their public discourses; and in their Epistles they observe the same method; as particularly asserting Christian doctrines and duties by the testimonies of prophetical scriptures, so generally affirming our religion to be chiefly grounded on them; *of which salvation* (saith St. Peter, concerning the salvation exhibited by the gospel) *the prophets did inquire, and search diligently, who prophesied of the grace to come unto you;*[h] and (in regard to the conviction of others) he seems to prefer the attestation of this kind before the special revelation immediately made to the apostles; for having spoken of it, he subjoins, καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον· *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye do take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.*[i] And St. Paul

[b] 1 Pet. i. 8; Rom. xv. 13; Phil. i. 25; Heb. iii. 6; Rom. xii. 12.
[c] Psal. cxviii. 24; Matt. xxi. 9, 42; 1 Pet. ii. 7; Acts iv. 11.
[d] John v. 39.
[e] Luke xxiv. 27; xxii. 37; i. 70; xxiv. 44.
[f] Acts iii. 22, 24.
[g] Acts x. 43; xiii. 27; xv. 15; xxiv. 14; John i. 45; Acts xviii. 28; xxviii. 23.
[h] 1 Pet. i. 10.
[i] 2 Pet. i. 19.

saith, that *the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, was then made manifest, and by the prophetical scriptures, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, to the obedience of faith;*[g] and, *The holy writings* (he telleth Timothy) *were able to make* him *wise to* the *salvation* which is *by the faith of Jesus Christ;*[h] that is, they were able to show and persuade to him the truth of Christianity, which promiseth salvation to all that heartily embrace it and observe its laws.

Such a stress was laid upon this probation by the founders of our religion; and no wonder; for that it is not only extremely forcible in itself, but hath some particular uses, and some peculiar advantages beyond others. The foreknowledge of future contingent events (such as were many of those concerning our Saviour, depending upon the freest acts of human will), as it is for the manner of attaining it most incomprehensible to us, so it is most proper to God, and by all men so acknowledged; future contingencies being secrets which no man, no angel, no creature, can dive into, they being not discernible in their causes, which are indeterminate; nor in themselves, who are finite. The prediction, therefore, of such events could not otherwise than proceed from his pleasure; neither could he yield it in way of favour and approbation to that which was not perfectly true and good: this way, therefore, doth absolutely confirm the truth and goodness of Christian doctrine; it withal manifests the great worth and weight thereof, as implying the particular regard and care God had of it, designing it so anciently, laying trains of providence toward it, and preparing such evidences for the confirmation thereof; it together into the bargain maintaineth the truth of the Jewish dispensation, the sincerity of the ancient patriarchs and prophets, and the vigilant care the divine goodness hath always had over the state of religion, and toward the welfare of mankind; never leaving it destitute of some immediate revelations from himself. It had a peculiar aptitude to convert the Jews, who were possessed with a full persuasion concerning the veracity and sanctity of their ancient prophets; and could not therefore doubt concerning the truth of that, which appeared conformable to that which they had foretold should be declared and dispensed for their benefit. This probation also hath this advantage, that it singly taken doth suffice to convince; whereas others can hardly do it otherwise than in conjunction with one another, and especially with its aid: for the goodness of the doctrine may be contested in some points; and however good it seem, it may be imputed to human invention: strange effects may be deemed producible by other causes beside divine power; and they may be suffered to be done for other ends than for confirmation of truth; they are also commonly transient, and thence most liable to doubt. Providence also is in many cases so mysterious and unsearchable, that the incredulous will never allow any inferences to be drawn from it: but the plain correspondence of events to the standing records of ancient prophecies (obvious and conspicuous to every one that will consult and compare them) concerning a person to be sent by God, who should have such circumstances, and be so qualified, who should in God's name preach such doctrines and perform such works, is a proof, which alone may assure any man, that such a person doth come from God, and is in what he declareth or doeth approved by him: no counterfeiting can here find place; no evasion can be devised from the force of this proof.

This way, therefore, of discourse, our Lord and his apostles (whose business it was by the most proper and effectual methods to subdue the reasons of men to the *obedience of faith* and entertainment of Christian truth) did especially use; as generally in respect to all things concerning our Lord, so particularly in regard to his passion; declaring it to happen punctually according to what had been foreseen by God, and thence foreshowed by his prophets, rightly understood: *He took the twelve* (saith St. Luke of our Lord), *and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished: for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully en-*

[g] Rom. xvi. 25, 26; i. 2.
[h] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

treated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death.[i] And again, after his resurrection, he thus reproves his disciples: *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*[j] They did not then (partly being blinded with prejudice, partly not having used due industry, and perhaps not excelling in natural capacity, however, not yet being sufficiently enlightened by divine grace) apprehend, or discern, that, according to the prophetical instructions, our Lord was so to suffer; but afterward, when he had *opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,*[k] they did see, and especially urge this point: then St. Peter declared, that *the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow:*[l] then it was their manner to *reason* (as is said of St. Paul) *out of the scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered: saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer; delivering first of all, that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures:*[m] this is that which in my text St. Peter doth insist upon, affirming about the passion of Christ, that it not only had been predicted by one, or more, but foreshowed by an universal consent of all the prophets; to illustrate and confirm which assertion of his, is the scope of our present discourse: to perform which, after having briefly touched the state of the matter in hand, we shall apply ourselves.

That the Messias was to come in an humble and homely manner (without appearance of worldly splendour or grandeur;) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness; that he was to cause offences, and find oppositions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be hated and scorned, to be disgracefully and harshly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea, that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned, and executed as a malefactor, is a truth indeed, which the Jews (although they firmly believed and earnestly expected the coming of a Messias) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits; yea, inconsistent with the nature and drift of their religion, as they did understand it; for their religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity, and prosperity, as things most highly valuable; did propound them as very proper, if not as the sole rewards of piety and obedience; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard: they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction, and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell: they particularly are said to have conceited, that to be rich was a needful qualification for a prophet (no less needful than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good conversation and life:) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem, the Spirit of God doth not rest upon a poor man;* (that is, no special communications of grace, or of wisdom and goodness, are by God ever afforded to persons of a low and afflicted condition;) being a maxim which they had framed, and which currently passed among them: that he, therefore, who was designed to be so notable a prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore should be so highly favoured by God, that he should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd; that could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had further (in congruity to these prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and self-flattery which were peculiar to that nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the Messias was to come in a great visible state and power; to achieve deeds of mighty prowess and renown; to bring the nations of the world into subjection under him; and so to reign among them in huge majesty and prosperity. When

[i] Luke xviii. 31, 32, 33.
[j] Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 46.
[k] Luke xxiv. 45.
[l] 1 Pet. i. 11.
[m] Acts xvii. 2, 3; xxvi. 22, 23; 1 Cor. xv. 3.

Jesus, therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications, and performances, to the prophetical characters of the Messias), did first appear such as he did, with some pretences, or intimations rather, that he was the Messias, their stomach presently rose at it;[n] they were exceedingly scandalized at him; they deemed him not only *a madman* (one possessed or distracted) and *an impostor*, but *a blasphemer;*[o] for no less than blasphemy they took it to be for so mean and pitiful a wretch (as to their eyes he seemed) to assume unto himself so high a dignity, and so near a relation unto God, as being the Messias did import. We even see the disciples themselves of our Lord so deeply imbued with this national prejudice, that, even after they had avowed him for the Christ, they could scarce with patience hear him foretelling what grievous things should befall him: St. Peter himself, upon that occasion, even just after he seriously had confessed him to be the Christ, *did* (as it is expressed) *take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord:*[p] yea, presently after that our Lord most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of a kingdom, and of being grandees therein: yea, further, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them;[q] for even then they demanded of him, whether he would *at that time restore the kingdom unto Israel;*[r] meaning such an external visible kingdom.

Hence, of all things notifying the Messias, this seemeth to be the only particular which in general the Jews did not, or would not, see and acknowledge; and this caused them to oversee all other glorious marks, how clearly soever shining in and about the person of Jesus: this cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being duly affected with the wonderfulness of his works, from minding, or from crediting all the testimonies from heaven ministered unto him; this, as St. Paul telleth us, was the main *scandal*, which obstructed their embracing the gospel.[s] As it was their ignorance or error in this point which disposed them to persecute our Lord[t] (*nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset*, as Tertullian saith;[u] *if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory,*[v] saith St. Paul;) so it was that which maintained their obstinate hatred of his name and memory; although graced with so illustrious testimonies of divine power and providence.

We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars concerning our Lord, allege the general consent of God's people in expounding the prophets according to our sense, this being one of those points in respect to which the prophets themselves did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that *they should look and not see; hear and not understand;* yielding herein special occasion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?*[w] Yet notwithstanding their affected and culpable blindness, there is no particular concerning the Messias in the ancient scriptures, either more frequently in way of mystical insinuation and adumbration glanced at, or more clearly in direct and plain language expressed; or which also by reasonable deduction thence may be more strongly inferred than this.

1. I say, first, it is frequently glanced at by mystical insinuations; for explaining the intent of which assertion, we shall premise somewhat, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient scripture in the New Testament; the which, together with others connected with them, or bearing just analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.

We may then consider, that the all-wise God (who *worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*, and *to whom all things are present*), having *before eternal times*, as St. Paul speaketh, determined in due time to send the Messias, for accomplishing the greatest design that ever was to be managed in this world,

[n] Matt. xvi. 20. [o] Matt. xiii. 57; xxvi. 65.
[p] Matt. xvi. 22; xvii. 2; John xvi. 12.
[q] Matt. xx. 21, 25. [r] Acts i. 6.

[s] 1 Cor. i. 23; Acts xiii. 27; iii. 17.
[t] John xv. 21. [u] Tert. in Marc. iii. 9.
[v] 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[w] Isa. vi. 9; Matt. xiii. 13; Ezek. xii. 2; Acts xxviii. 26; Isa. liii. 1.

(that which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the richest benefits to the principal of his creatures here), did by his incomprehensible providence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency and an advantageous reference thereto;[x] so that, when it came upon the stage, it might appear that the main of the plot consisted therein; and that whatever was acted before had principally a respect thereto. As, therefore, from the beginning of things, God did in a gradual method make real preparations towards it, by several steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order thereto (somewhat to Adam himself, more to Abraham and the patriarchs, somewhat further to Moses, much more yet to divers of the prophets among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered divers kinds of instruction conformable to it, and conducible to the promoting and entertainment thereof), so he did also take especial care by many apposite representations (*νοητὰ θεωρήματα*, *intelligible spectacles*,[y] or objects of mental speculation, Eusebius calleth them), handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it; that so it might at length show itself with more solemnity, and less surprise: the most eminent persons, therefore, whom he raised up, and employed in his affairs, tending to that end, as they did resemble the Messias in being instruments of God's particular grace and providence (being indeed inferior Christs and Mediators, partial Saviours and Redeemers of his people, as they are sometimes called;[z]) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they performed, in the principal accidents befalling them, to represent him (becoming *εἰκονικοὶ Χριστοί*, *Christs in image*, as Eusebius again styleth them:[a]) the rites also and services of religion instituted by them in God's name were adapted to the same purpose;[b] they and all things about them, by God's especial direction and wise care, being fitted so as to be congruous emblems and shadows prefiguring Christ, and whatever appertained to him: thus was Adam, as St. Paul calleth him, *a type of Christ*;[c] and Abel, Melchisedec, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel, are intimated to have been such; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suited to answer somewhat remarkable concerning him; so that we may say of them all, as the apostle to the Hebrews did of the Jewish priests, *they served to the subindication and shadowing of heavenly things*.* In David particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof, in the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea, the Messias is called by his name, as if he were revived in the Messias.[d] It indeed well suited the dignity of this great personage, and the importance of his business, that he should have appointed so notable heralds and harbingers to *go before his face*; furnished with conspicuous ensigns and badges denoting their relation to him.[e] It was proper that God should appear to have had always an express regard towards him: it consequently doth serve to our edification; for that we, duly comparing things, and espying this admirable correspondency, may be instructed thereby, and established in our faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's wisdom, so harmoniously connecting things, and of his goodness, so provident for our welfare; may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the Messias, and to esteem his design: such uses St. Paul signifieth, when, having compared divers things concerning Moses to things concerning Christ, he saith, *All these things happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come*.[f]

It is also (both for illustration and proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of Christ, many

[x] Eph. i. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 7; Eph. i. 3; iii. 9; Rom. xvi. 25; Col. i. 26.

[y] Euseb. Hist. i. 3.

[z] Psal. cv. 15; Isa. xlv. 1; Heb. viii. 6; Gal. iii. 19; Neh. ix. 27; Acts vii. 35.

[a] Euseb. Hist. i. 14.

[b] Heb. viii. 5; Exod. xxv. 40.

* Heb. viii. 5,—Οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.

[c] Rom. v. 14.

[d] Jer. xxx. 9; Hos. iii. 5; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; xxxvii. 24, 25.

[e] (Heb. viii. 5; x. 1; ix. 23; Gal. iv. 24; Col. ii. 17.)

[f] 1 Cor. x. 11, 6; 1 Pet. i. 12.

things are spoken of them, as such; many things are ascribed to them, which only, or chiefly, were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed to divine wisdom not so convenient in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men. That this observation is true; that, I say, under the names of persons representing Christ (or of things, we may add, adumbrating his things) many things are intimated principally concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised which appear never accomplished, except after an improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation; such as do not well seem to suit the nature of true histories and serious promises: thus, for instance, many things are foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous state of the Jewish church;[g] which history and experience do testify never (according to strictness of literal acceptation, yea not in any tolerable degree, near the height of what the words import) to have come to pass: thus also, as the apostle to the Hebrews argueth,[h] effects are attributed to the Jewish rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of things cannot belong to them, otherwise than as substitutes and shadows of things more high in substance and efficacy: thus also what is with solemn oath promised to Solomon (concerning the vast extent and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace, and prosperity;[i] together with his mighty acts and successful achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been accomplished: thus also David (as St. Peter in the second of the Acts observeth,[k] and groundeth his argumentation on it) speaketh divers things of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him: such things, therefore, having some truth under them) are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect state of things under the Messias; to concern him (who was to be *the end of the law*) and his dispensation, which was to be the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified:[l] this is that which St. Austin signifieth, when he saith of Christ, that *Him all the promises of the Jewish nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacrifices, their temple, and all their sacraments whatever, did resound,* or express.*

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the New Testament; but they agree, as to their general importance, to the sense of the ancient Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of the scriptures: they did suppose every where a *Midrash,* or mystical sense; which they very studiously (even to an excess of curiosity and diligence) searched after: it was a constant and confident opinion of their doctors, that all things in Moses' law were typical, and capable of allegorical exposition; and Philo's writings (composed immediately after our Saviour's times) do show that opinion then to have been passable.† We have also several instances and intimations thereof in the New Testament: neither is it probable, that our Lord and the apostles would, in their discourses and disputations with the Jews, have used this way of alleging and interpreting passages of scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Why God should choose to express matters of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine;‡ it might be perhaps for reasons only known to himself, above our ken or cognizance: yet divers probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable, seeing they are expressed or hinted in scripture. It might be for a decent and harmonious discrimination of times, of dispensations, of persons; it might be from the depth of things to conciliate reverence

[g] Isa. xxv. 8.
[h] Heb. x. 4.
[i] Psal. xlv.; lxxii.; lxxxiii. &c.
[k] Acts ii. 29.

* Quem Christum—omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiæ, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, et cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt.—*Aug. ad Volus. Ep.* 3.

† *Vide* Capell. in Exerc. ad Zohar.

‡ *Vide* Chrys. tom. vi. p. 649, &c. 658, &c.

[l] Rom. x. 4; Luke xxii. 37; 1 Pet. i. 10, &c.

to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of attaining thereto; it might be by exercise to improve the understandings of men, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them modest and humble; it might be for occasion to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word, and to convey special gifts of interpretation; it might be to conceal some things from some persons unworthy or unfit to know them, especially from haughty and self-conceited persons; it might be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great events;[m] such as was the misusing and persecuting our Lord: for such reasons it might be, and there is no good reason against it; for it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly discovered at all times, and to all persons; it is evident that some things are couched in parabolical and mysterious expressions;[n] it is particularly the manner of prophetical instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season, nor suitable to every capacity; but reserved for times, and persons, for which the divine wisdom only knows them most proper.

These things being thus premised, we come to our particular case, and say, that (according to what our Lord and his apostles teach) the Messiah's being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing itself determined to be, there are peculiar reasons why it rather so, than in a more open manner, should be represented, contained in those words of Tertullian: *The sacrament indeed* (saith he) *of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predictions: forasmuch as that the more incredible it was* (*if it should have been preached nakedly*), *the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be overshadowed, that the difficulty of understanding it might be cause of seeking of God's grace.** Supposing it also that it should be, it is plain that the passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias, Jeremiah, and the like, may congruously be applied thereto; that the elevation of the brazen serpent, and the slaying the paschal lamb, may appositely represent it; the Jewish priests, with all their sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in, and accommodated thereto: these things indeed by themselves solitarily are not apt peremptorily to evince that it should be; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the supposition thereof; according to the notion premised about the figurative relation between the matters of the old world before the Messias, and the new one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the Messiah's sufferings were implied in the afflictions ascribed to his representative king David, such as he in several Psalms (in the 35th, 69th, 109th, 118th, and especially in the 22d Psalm) describeth them; wherein divers passages, expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition, occur, which by the history of his life do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his person; which therefore there is a necessity, or at least much reason, that they should be applied to the Messias, whom that holy king did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing the passages we find there to that which befell Jesus, we may observe an admirable harmony; there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in express and emphatical terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and despised of the people:*[o])—the causeless hatred and enmity of the populacy and of the great ones toward him (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrong-*

[m] Rev. ii. 7; xiii. 18; xvii. 9; Matt. xiii. 9; xxiv. 15; Dan. ix. 1; John v. 39; Luke xxiv. 45; 1 Cor. xii. 10; xiv. 26; Eph. i. 9, 10; Matt. xiii. 13; xi. 25; vii. 6; 1 Cor. ii. 8; Acts iii. 17.

[n] Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 6.

* Utique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat, quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum, quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum; ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quæreret.—*Tert. in Jud.* 10.

[o] Psal. xxii. 6.

fully, are mighty; they compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause:[p])—the ingrateful requital for all the good intended and performed by him (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love;*)—their rejecting him (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner:*[q])—their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him (*Without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.* And, *False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.* And, *The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue:*[r]—their bitter insulting over him in his affliction (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea, the objects gathered themselves together against me:*) *They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded: καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, and to the smart of my wounds they have added*[s] (say the LXX.)—their scornful reviling, flouting, and mocking him (*All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him.*[t] And, *I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they shaked their heads: They opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it. Ἐπείρασάν με, ἐξεμυκτήρισάν με μυκτηρισμὸν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοῦς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν. They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me:*[u])—their cruel and contemptuous usage of him (*Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me:*[v])—their abusive dealing with him, when he in his distress called for some refreshment (*They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink:*[w])—their disposal of his garments upon his suffering (*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture:*[x])—his being deserted of his friends and followers, and thence destitute of all consolation (*I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children; —I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none:*[y]) —the sense of God's withholding his favour and help (*My Goy, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me?*[z])—his charitable disposition and demeanour toward his enemies and persecutors (*But as for me, when they were sick* (*when they did trouble me,** say the LXX.) *my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled myself with fasting, and my prayer returned unto my own bosom. I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother.*[a]) Which passages, and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the gospels, I need not to show; we do, I presume, all of us well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able ourselves to make the application.

But there further are not only such oblique intimations, or significations of this matter, shrouded under the coverture of other persons and names; but very direct and immediate predictions concerning the Messiah's being to suffer, most clearly expressed: that whole famous chapter (the 53d) of Isaiah doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented: his appearing meanness (*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him:*)—the disgrace, contempt, repulses, and rejection he underwent (*He is despised and rejected of*

[p] Psal. lxix. 4; xxxv. 7; cix. 3.
[q] Psal. xxxv. 12; cix. 5; cxviii. 22.
[r] Psal. xxxv. 7, 11; cix. 2.
[s] Psal. xxxv. 15; lxix. 26.
[t] Psal. xxii. 7, 8.
[u] Psal. cix. 25; xxxv. 21, 16.
[v] Psal. xxii. 16, 17.

* Ἐν τῷ αὐτοὺς παρενοχλεῖν μοι.
[w] Psal. lxix. 21.
[x] Psal. xxii. 18.
[y] Psal. lxix. 8, 20.
[z] Psal. xxii. 1; lxix. 17.
[a] Psal. xxxv. 13, 14.

men—we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not:)—his afflicted state (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted:*)—the bitter and painful manner of his affliction (He *was stricken;* he *bare stripes;* he *was wounded and bruised;*)—his being accused, adjudged, and condemned as a malefactor (*He was taken from prison and from judgment—he was numbered among the transgressors:*)—his death consequent (*He poured out his soul unto death; he was cut out of the land of the living:*[b])—the design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by Divine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins, and our salvation (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin—he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed—surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows—for the transgression of my people he was striken—the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all:*[c])—his sustaining all this with a willing, quiet, humble patience, and perfect meekness (*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth:*)—his charitable praying for his persecutors, and designing their welfare (*He made intercession for the transgressors:*[d])—the blessed consequences and happy success of his sufferings, in the conversion and justification of men; in performing God's will and work; in being satisfied, rewarded, and exalted himself (*He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many:—I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong:*[e]) which passages, as they do most exactly suit unto Jesus, and might in a sort constitute a true historical narration of what he did endure, together with the doctrines delivered in the gospel concerning the intents and effects of his sufferings, so that they did, according to the intention of the divine Spirit, relate to the Messias, may from several considerations be made apparent; the context and coherence of all this passage with the matters precedent and subsequent, the which plainly do respect the Messias and his times, do argue it; *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!* and, *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently,*[f] &c. are passages immediately going before; to which this chapter is knit in way of continuation; and immediately after it doth follow, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear,*[g] &c. being a no less perspicuous than elegant description of the church, enlarged by accession of the Gentiles, which was to be brought to pass by the Messias. The general scope of this whole prophecy enforceth the same conclusion; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other person imaginable beside the Messias doth further evince it; so high are the things ascribed to the suffering person; as that he should *bear the sins of all God's people, and heal them;* that he should *by his knowledge justify many* (or the multitude;) that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand* to these grand purposes; that God would *divide him a portion with the great, and that he should divide the spoil with the strong:* the magnificency and importance of which sayings (rightly understood and weighed) do well agree to the Messias, but not to any other person or simple man: whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a Messias was to come (as they with general consent did suppose they had), they had as much reason to apply this place, as any other, to him, and thence to acknowledge that he was designed to be an eminent sufferer. And indeed divers of the ancient Targumists and most learned Rabbins did expound this place of the one Messias, which was to come; as the *Pugio fidei*, and other learned writers, do by several express

[b] Isa. liii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 12.
[c] Isa. liii. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6, 12.
[d] Isa. liii. 7, 12.
[e] Isa. liii. 10, 11, 12.
[f] Isa. lii. 7, 13.
[g] Isa. liv. 1, &c.

testimonies declare. This place also discovereth the vanity of that figment devised by some later Jews; who, to evade it, and to oppose Jesus, have affirmed there was to be a double Messias; one, who should be much afflicted; another, who should greatly prosper; since we may observe, that here both great afflictions and glorious performances concurrently are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are by parts also clearly foretold in other places of this prophet, and in other prophetical Scriptures; by Isaiah again in the chapter immediately preceding, *Behold* (saith God there), *my servant shall deal prudently: he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high:*[h] there is God's servant (he, who in way of excellency is such, that is, in the style of this prophet, the Messias) in his real glorious capacity. It followeth concerning his external appearance; *His visage was so marred more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men.* And again, in the 49th chapter; *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.*[i] What can be more express and clear, than that it is signified here that the Messias, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and veneration of himself, was to be despised by men, to be detested by the Jewish people, to appear in a servile and base condition? The same prophet doth again, in the 50th chapter, bring him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*[j] His offending the Jews, so as thereby to aggravate their sins and accelerate their punishment, is also thus expressed by the same prophet: *And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*[k]

The prophet Zechariah doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings, his low condition, in those words: *Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; lowly, and riding upon an ass* (that is, *pauper*, mean and sorry to appearance.) His manner of death in those words: *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*[m] And again, *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn*, &c.[n] The prophet Daniel also, in that place from which probably the name Messias was taken, and which most expressly mentioneth him, saith, that *after sixty-two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself.*[o] Now, from all these passages of scripture (beside divers others to the same purpose, observable by those whose industry is assisted by divine illumination) we may well conclude with our Lord, Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστόν· *That thus it was written, and thus* (according to the prophet's foreshewing) *it was to happen, that the Christ should suffer;*[p] suffer in a life of penury and disgrace, in a death of sorrow and shame.

That it was to fall out thus, might also be well inferred by reasons grounded upon the qualities of the Messiah's person, and upon the nature of his performances, such as they are described in prophetical scripture: he was to be really, and plainly to appear, a person of most admirable virtue and goodness; but never (as even pagan philosophers have observed) was, or can there be any such without undergoing the trial of great affliction.* He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts (especially to the greatest part of men, that is, to the poor and afflicted) of *all righteousness;* to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty (*humility, patience, meekness, charity, self-denial, entire resignation* to God's will:) this he should not have had opportunity or advantage of doing, should he have been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous in secular matters: he was to exercise

[h] Isa. lii. 13, 14.
[i] Isa. xlix. 7.
[j] Isa. l. 6.
[k] Isa. viii. 14; (Psal. ii. 2.)

* Plato, Seneca, &c.
[l] Zech. ix. 9.
[m] Zech. xiii. 7.
[n] Zech. xii. 10.
[o] Dan. ix. 26.
[p] Luke xxiv. 46.

great pity and sympathy toward all mankind; toward the doing which it was requisite that he should himself taste and feel the inconveniences, troubles, pains, and sorrows incident to us. He was to advance the repute of spiritual goods and eternal blessings, depressing the value of these corporeal and temporal things which men do so fondly admire and dote on: the most compendious and effectual way of doing which was by an exemplary neglect or rejection of worldly glories and enjoyments;* refusing the honours, profits, and pleasures here adjoined to a high state. He was, by the most kindly, gentle, and peaceable means, to erect a spiritual kingdom; by pure force of reason to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God; by wise instruction to raise in us the hopes of future recompenses in heaven: to the accomplishment of which purposes, temporal glory (working on the carnal apprehensions and affections of men) had rather been prejudicial than conducible. He was to accomplish and manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would surely become more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was also most highly to merit from God, for himself and for us (to merit God's high approbation of what he did, God's favour and grace to us;) this he could not perform so well, as by willingly enduring, for God's sake, and in our behalf, the most hard and grievous things. He was, in fine, designed *perfectly to save us*, and consequently to appease God's wrath, to satisfy divine justice, to expiate our sins; whereto it was requisite that he should undergo what we had deserved, being punished and afflicted for us.

Now that Jesus our Lord did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared by the prophets concerning the Messias, we need not, by minutely relating the known history of his life and death, make out any further, since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary can deny it: I shall therefore conclude, that it is a clear and certain truth which St. Peter in our text affirmeth, that *those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

Now, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.[q] Amen.

SERMON LXXVII.

A WHIT-SUNDAY SERMON OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

ACTS ii. 38.——*And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

AMONG the divers reasonable grounds and ends of the observing festival solemnities (such as are comforting the poor by hospitable relief, refreshing the weary labourer by cessation from ordinary toil, maintaining good-will among neighbours by cheerful and free conversation, quickening our spirits and raising our fancies by extraordinary representations and divertisements, infusing and preserving good humour in people;*[a] such as are also the decent conspiring in public expressions of special reverence to God, withdrawing our minds from secular cares, and engaging them to spiritual meditations), the two principal designs of them seem to be these:

1. The affording occasion (or rather imposing a constraint upon us) with a competent frequency to attend unto, to consider upon, to instruct ourselves and others in the mysterious doctrines and institutions of our religion.

2. The engaging us seasonably to practice that great duty of thankfully remem-

* *Vide* Theodoti Orat. in Eph. 1, Concil. p. 997.

* Θεοὶ δὲ οἰκτείραντες τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον πεφυκὸς γένος, ἀναπαύλας τε αὐτοῖς τῶν πόνων ἐτάξαντο, τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς τοῖς θεοῖς.—Plato 2, de Leg.

Legum conditores festos instituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publice cogerentur, tanquam necessarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum.—*Sen. de tranq. an.* 15.

[q] Rev. i. 5, 6, v. 13.

[a] Esth. ix.; Deut. xvi.

bering and praising God for those eminent mercies and favours, which by his great grace and goodness have been vouchsafed to us.

For these purposes chiefly did God himself appoint the Jewish festivals; for instance, the passover, the reason of which being instituted is thus expressed: *that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life:*[b] which words imply that the observation of that solemnity did serve to preserve the memory, yea the continual remembrance of that so notable a blessing, which otherwise might have been totally forgotten, or seldom considered; the same did also suggest occasion of inquiry concerning the reasons of its appointment, procuring consequently needful information in that material point of their religion; as doth appear by those words of God, *And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover.*[c]

In compliance with which prudent designs, the Christian church, from her first infancy, hath embraced the opportunity of recommending to her children the observation of her chief holy festivals,[d] continuing the time, and retaining the name, although changing or improving the matter and reason of those ancient ones; the divine Providence concurring to further such proceeding, by so ordering the events of things that the seasons of dispensing the evangelical blessings should fall in with those wherein the legal benefits most resembling and representing them were commemorated; that so there might be as well a happy coincidence of time, as correspondence in matter, between the ancient and new solemnities; whence as the exhibition of evangelical doctrines and mysteries did meet with minds more suitably prepared to entertain them, and as less innovation from former usage did appear (a thing observable to be respected in most or all the positive institutions of our religion), so withal Christians were engaged, while they considered the fresh greater mercies by God vouchsafed to them, to reflect also upon the favours, from the same stock of goodness, indulged by him to his ancient people; that as those should chiefly be remembered, so these should not wholly be forgotten: thus did God dispose, that our Saviour should then suffer, when the Paschal Lamb was to be offered; or that the redemption of the world from sin and misery should then be celebrated by us, when the deliverance from the Egyptian slavery was commemorated by them: and so (that we may approach to our purpose) at the time of Pentecost, when the Jews were obliged to *rejoice before the Lord*,[e] rendering thanks unto him for the harvest newly gathered in, and the earth's good fruits (the main supports and comforts of this life) which were by God's blessing bestowed on them, then did God bountifully impart the first fruits of his holy Spirit, the food of our souls and refreshment of our hearts; then did he cause his labourers to put their sickle into the spiritual harvest; converting souls, and gathering them as mature fruits into the garners of the church.

At the very season also (which is remarkable) that the law was delivered to the Jews, and the ancient covenant established which did happen at Pentecost, as may be probably collected from the text, and is commonly supposed by the Jewish doctors, who therefore called this feast שמחה תורה *the joy* (or joyful feast) *of the Law*,[f] in signification of their joy, using then to crown their heads with garlands, and strew their houses with green herbs; at that very time was the Christian law most signally promulged, and the new covenant's ratification most solemnly declared by the miraculous effusion of the divine Spirit.

The benefit, therefore, and blessing, which at this time we are bound especially to consider and commemorate,* is in effect the publication and establishment of the covenant evangelical, the foundation of all our hopes, and all our claims to happiness; but more immediately and directly the donation of the Holy Spirit to the Christian church, and to all its members; for the better understanding

[b] Deut. xvi. 3. [c] Exod. xii. 26, 27.
[d] Aug. de Civ. Dei, x. 4.

* Πεντηκοστὴν ἑορτάζομεν, καὶ πνεύματος ἐπιδημίαν, καὶ προθεσμίαν ἐπαγγελίας, καὶ ἐλπίδος συμπλήρωσιν, &c.—Naz. Orat. 44.
[e] Deut. xvi. [f] Exod. xix. 1.

and more truly valuing of which most excellent benefit, let us briefly declare the nature and design thereof.

Almighty God, seeing the generality of mankind alienated from himself by gross ignorance of its duty toward him, and by habitual inclinations to violate his holy laws (originally implanted by him in our nature, or anciently revealed to our first parents), immersed in error, enslaved to vice, and obnoxious to the woful consequences of them, severe punishment and extreme misery; was pleased, in his immense goodness and pity, to design its rescue from that sad condition; and in pursuance of that gracious design did resolve upon expedients the most admirable and most efficacious that could be: for to redeem men from the tyranny of sin and hell, to reconcile them to himself, to recover them into a happy state, he sent his own only beloved Son out of his bosom into this world, clothed with our nature; by him, as by a Plenipotentiary Commissioner from himself, inviting all men to return unto him; declaring himself, by the meritorious obedience, the expiatory passion, the effectual intercession of his dear Son, abundantly satisfied for, and ready to grant a full pardon of all offences committed against him in their state of error and estrangement; to admit them into a state of present indemnity and peace, yea to settle them in perpetual alliance and friendship with himself, upon most fair and gentle terms; namely, that renouncing their erroneous principles, and reforming their vicious courses of life, they cheerfully would embrace his merciful overtures, and thereafter conform their lives to his righteous laws; the which, together with all his good intentions concerning them, he, by the same blessed agent, clearly discovered to them; fully by him instructing them in their duty, and strongly encouraging them to the performance thereof by the promise of most bountiful rewards; his certain love and favour, attended with endless joy and bliss. Thus *did* (as St. Paul expresseth it) *the saving grace of God appear unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, expecting that blessed hope.*[g]

[g] Tit. ii. 11, 12.

But to render this wonderfully gracious design successful, in a way of wisdom and reasonable proceeding accommodated to the capacities of human nature, it was requisite that there should be provided convincing arguments to persuade men of the truth and reality of these things (that indeed such an extraordinary agent, with such a message, was come from heaven), effectual means of admonishing and exciting men to a heedful advertency toward them, competent motives to a cordial acceptance of them; a power also sufficient, notwithstanding their natural impotency and instability, to continue them in the belief, to uphold them in the practice of the duties prescribed, in the performance of the conditions required.

For if it were not very credible, that God had truly those intentions toward us, or if we did not much regard the overture of them, or if we did not conceive the business highly to concern us; or if, resolving to comply with the gospel, we yet were unable to discharge the conditions thereof, the design would be totally frustrated, and of itself come to nothing. To prevent which disappointment of his merciful intentions, Almighty God did abundantly provide, in a manner and measure suitable to the glorious importance of them; for to the ministry of his eternal Wisdom he adjoined the efficacy of his eternal love, and blessed Spirit; the which not only conducted God our Saviour into his fleshly tabernacle, and with *unmeasurable communications*[h] of himself did continually reside within him, but also did attend him in the conspicuous performance of numberless miraculous works, implying divine power and goodness, as exceeding not only any natural, but all created power (such as were by mere word and will healing the sick and restoring the maimed, ejecting evil spirits, discerning the secret thoughts of men, foretelling contingent events, reviving the dead, raising himself from the grave;) which works, some expressly, others by parity of reason, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; for, *If* (saith our Lord) *I by the Spirit of God cast out devils*—and, *God* (saith St. Peter) *anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and*

[h] John iii. 34.

with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil: and, *Who* (saith St. Paul) *was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Holy Spirit, by the resurrection from the dead:*[i] so did God afford the most evident attestation that could be to the truth of our Saviour's quality, commission, and doctrine; by so clear and rousing significations did God invite men to take notice of these things.

But further to induce them heartily to comply with these gracious overtures, and to render them thoroughly available to the purpose designed, the salvation of men, according to the terms prescribed, of faith in God, and obedience to his commandments, God was pleased further to resolve, and he faithfully did promise, that he would impart the same blessed Spirit, as a continual guide and assistant to all those who seriously would entertain those tenders of mercy, sincerely resolving the performance of the conditions.

Now, although the natural and ordinary manner of this divine Spirit's operation (like that of all spirits and more subtile substances) is not by violent and sensible impressions,* but rather in way of imperceptible penetration, or gentle insinuating of itself into the subject upon which it worketh, hardly discovering itself otherwise than by the notable effects resulting from it; and although likewise the proper and principal effects thereof, according to divine designation, do relate to the furthering our performance of the said conditions requisite toward our salvation, that is, to the cherishing our faith and quickening our obedience; disposing men to perform virtuous actions, rather than to achieve wondrous exploits; yet more fully to satisfy the doubtful, to convince the incredulous (to confound the obstinate) world about the truth of his intentions, more illustriously to manifest the completion of his promise, more surely to fortify the faithful against the scandals and temptations, which their professions would incur,† God was pleased after our Lord's ascension, and when the apostolical promulgation of the Christian doctrine did commence, to dispense both to the teachers and the disciples thereof more liberal communications of that Holy Spirit, attended with notorious, strange, and wonderful effects, apt to provoke the admiration of men, to persuade their judgments, to prevail upon their affections, to produce within them strong desires of partaking so high a privilege and excellent endowment.[j]

The memorial, therefore, of that most gracious and glorious dispensation, the Christian church wisely and piously hath continually preserved, obliging us at this time peculiarly to bless God for that incomparable and inestimable gift, conferred then most visibly upon the Church, and still really bestowed upon every particular member, duly incorporated thereinto.

I say, bestowed upon every particular member of the church; for the evangelical covenant doth extend to every Christian; and a principal ingredient thereof is the collation of this Spirit; which is the *finger of God*, whereby (according to the prophet Jeremiah's description of that covenant) *God's law is put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts; inscribed* (as St. Paul allusively speaketh) *not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone but in the fleshly tables of the heart;*[k] not only, as the Jewish law represented, from without to the senses, but impressed within upon the mind and affections; whence God's Spirit is called the *Spirit of promise*,[l] the donation thereof being the peculiar promise of the gospel; and the end of our Saviour's undertaking is by St. Paul declared, *that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*,[m] that is, by embracing Christianity might partake thereof, according to God's promise; and the apostolical ministry or exhibition of the gospel is styled *the ministration of the*

* Καὶ γὰρ σὺ θείας ἀπέλαυσας χάριτος βαπτιζόμενος, καὶ πνεύματος μετέσχες, εἰ καὶ μὴ πρὸς τὸ σημεῖα ποιεῖν, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἀρκεῖ πρὸς τὸ πολιτείαν ὀρθὴν, καὶ ἠκριβωμένην λαβεῖν.—Chrys. tom. vi. Orat. 12, ad Demet.

† Τῶν γὰρ χαρισμάτων τῶν πνευματικῶν τὰ μὲν ἀόρατά ἐστιν καὶ πίστει καταλαμβάνεται μόνῃ, τὰ δὲ καὶ αἰσθητὸν ἐνδείκνυται σημεῖον πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀπίστων πληροφορίαν.—Chrys. tom. v. Orat. 88.

[i] Matt. xii. 28; Acts. x. 38; Rom. i. 4.

[j] Acts ii. 12, 43; iv. 14; ix. 11, 16; 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

[k] Luke xi. 20; Jer. xxxi. 33; 2 Cor. iii. 3; Heb. viii. 10; Ezek. xi. 19; John vi. 45.

[l] Πνεῦμα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, Eph. i. 13.

[m] Gal. iii. 14.

Spirit; and *tasting of the heavenly gift, and participation of the Holy Ghost* is part of a Christian's charter;[n] and the susception of Christianity is thus described by St. Paul: *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath chosen you from the beginning to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*[o] and our Saviour instructed Nicodemus, that *no man can enter into the kingdom of God* (that is, become a Christian, or subject of God's spiritual kingdom) *without being regenerated by water, and by the Spirit,*[p] that is, without baptism, and the spiritual grace attending it; according as St. Peter doth in the words adjoining to our text imply, that the reception of the Holy Spirit is annexed to holy baptism: *Repent* (saith he) *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise* (that great promise of the Holy Ghost) *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call;*[q] that is, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, how far soever distant in place or time, whoever shall be invited unto, and shall embrace the Christian profession. St. John also maketh it to be the distinctive mark of those in whom Christ abideth, and who dwell in Christ, that is, of all true Christians, to have this Spirit: *Hereby* (saith he) *we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us;* and, *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*[r] And St. Paul denieth him to be a good Christian who is destitute thereof: *Now* (saith he) *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his;* and *know ye not* (saith he to the Corinthians) *that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*[s] that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common privilege of all Christians, such as ye profess yourselves to be? And the conversion of men to Christianity he thus expresseth: *After the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; not by any righteous works which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*[t] And all pious dispositions qualifying us for entrance into heaven and happiness (faith, charity, devotion, every grace, every virtue) are represented to be *fruits of the Holy Spirit:*[u] and the union of all Christians into one body, the catholic society of all truly faithful people, doth, according to St. Paul, result from this one Spirit, as a common soul animating and actuating them: *For* (saith he) *by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have all been made to drink of one Spirit.*[v]

In fine, whatever some few persons, or some petty sects (as the Pelagians of old, the Socinians now), may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine constantly, and with very general consent delivered in the catholic church, that to all persons by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated to Christianity, or admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of God's holy Spirit certainly is bestowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue then undertaken by them; enlightening their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and assisting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abused, ill-treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved, and increased to them: it is therefore by Tertullian (in his Prescriptions against heretics) reckoned as part of that fundamental rule, which was grounded upon the general tradition and consent of the Christian church, that *Christ had sent the virtue of the Holy Ghost in his room, which doth act believers;** to which that article doth answer of the Apostolical Creed, in which we profess to *believe the Holy Ghost;* meaning, I suppose, thereby, not only the bare existence of

[n] Διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος, 2 Cor. iii. 8; Heb. vi. 4.
[o] 2 Thess. ii. 13.
[p] John iii. 5.
[q] Acts ii. 38, 39.
[r] 1 John iii. 24; iv. 13.
[s] Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 16.

* *Tert. de Præsc.* 13,——misisse vicariam vim Spiritus Sancti, qui credentes agat.
[t] Tit. iii. 4, 5.
[u] Gal. v. 22; Eph. v. 9; Rom. iv. 5.
[v] 1 Cor. xii. 13.

the Holy Ghost, but also its gracious communication and energy.

Since, therefore, the collation of this eminent gift and favour so nearly doth concern us all; seeing it is our present duty more especially to praise and bless God for it; seeing also we are not wont to commensurate our gratitude to our estimation of the benefit unto which it relateth; let us a little consider the worth and excellency of this divine gift conferred on us.

That it is transcendently valuable, we may in general hence collect, that even in our Lord's esteem it did not only countervail, but in a manner surmount the benefit of his presence; Συμφέρει, *It is* (said he) *expedient* (or profitable) *for you that I go away;*[w] God having designed, that my absence shall be supplied by the Comforter's more beneficial presence: and wonderfully beneficial surely must that presence be, which could not only compensate, but render advantageous the loss of that most benign and sweet conversation, that tender and watchful inspection, that wholesome and powerful advice, that clear and lively pattern of all goodness shining forth in our Saviour's life upon his disciples. Could there be a more indulgent Master, a more discreet Guide, a more delightful Companion, a more faithful Friend, a mightier Protector, a surer Assistant, a sweeter Comforter than he? Yes, it seemeth that our Saviour did apprehend, that upon some accounts those benefits with greater advantage might accrue to them by the gift of his Spirit, than by his own immediate presence; that it by internal operation could more clearly inform the mind, more strongly incline the will, more vigorously affect the heart, than any exterior word or example could do: neither could our Saviour, according to the condition of his humanity, limited to particularities of time and place, so perfectly correspond to the various exigencies of mankind, as that omnipotent Spirit, intimately present to, uniformly diffused throughout all things: him, therefore, did our Saviour leave the guardian of his otherwise orphan disciples;[x] him did he substitute to undergo the care and tuition of them, to conduct them in the right way, to preserve them from dangers, to comfort them in distresses, to manage all their concernments, to be their counsellor, monitor, advocate, and patron; by him he meant fully to make good his word, *that he would be with them till the end of the world.**

But more distinctly to survey the many benefits and advantages proceeding from this excellent gift unto us, we may observe, that on it the foundation, the improvement, the completion, of all our good and happiness do depend; that to the Holy Spirit in truth and justice are to be ascribed — 1. our better state and being; 2. our spiritual powers and abilities; 3. our good and acceptable performances; whatever we are, whatever we can do, whatever we actually do perform as Christians.

1. We owe to the Holy Spirit our spiritual state and being; our spiritual life, our freedom, our honourable condition.

It is by virtue of this *quickening Spirit*, that from death and corruption we are raised to an immortal and indefectible state of life; that, as St. Paul saith, we, that *were dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened together with Christ;* we by this *incorruptible seed are born again;*[y] not, as formerly, to a life of vanity and misery, or to the enjoyment of a few transitory delights, tempered with many vexatious inconveniences, pains, and troubles; but to sure capacities of most solid and durable contentments, *to a living hope of an incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for us.*[z]

It is thereby we are free men, enjoying a true and perfect liberty; being enfranchised from divers intolerable slaveries, to which we naturally are subjected, and from which otherwise we could not be exempted; from the dominion of a rigorous law,† which prescribeth hard duties, but doth not afford strength to perform them;[a] apt to condemn us, but not able to convert us; from the clamorous

[w] John xvi. 7.

[x] Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς.—John xiv. 18.

* Ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.—Matt. xxviii. 20.

† Lex os omnium potuit obstruere, non potuit mentem convertere.—*Ambr.*

[y] Πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν, 1 Cor. xv. 45; John vi. 63; Eph. ii. 1, 5; 1 Pet. i. 23.

[z] 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

[a] Gal. iv. 24.

accusations of a guilty conscience, with anxious fears of punishment, that *spirit of bondage unto fear*,[b] of which St. Paul speaketh; from the tyranny of a most crafty, spiteful, and cruel enemy, that wicked one who did *captivate us at his pleasure*, and detained us under his power;[c] from the no less unjust, no less mischievous domination of our own flesh, or natural concupiscence, imposing grievous tasks and destructive necessities upon us: *It is* (saith St. Paul) *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which setteth us free from these laws of sin and of death;* so that, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*[d]

From such base thraldoms we thereby are redeemed, and not only so, but are advanced to an honourable condition, are ennobled with illustrious relations, are entitled to glorious priviliges: all the benefits and immunities contained in the charter of the new Jerusalem, all the advantages and privileges appropriated to God's court and family thereby appertain unto us; for *we have* (saith St. Paul) *access by one Spirit unto the Father*, and are thence *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God:* by this *holy unction* we are consecrated *kings and priests unto God;*[e] by participation of this *immortal seed* we are engrafted into alliance with the heavenly King, become children of God, brethren of Christ, heirs of paradise (an infinitely better paradise than that from which we formerly were excluded;) for this is that πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας that spirit which constituteth us the sons of God, qualifying us to be so by dispositions resembling God, and filial affections toward him;[f] certifying us that we are so, and causing us by a free instinct *to cry Abba, Father*,[g] running into his bosom of love, and flying under the wings of his mercy in all our needs and distresses; whence *as many as are led by the Spirit, they* (saith St. Paul) *are the sons of God;* and, *the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;*[h] yea, which may seem yet a further pitch of dignity, we, by intervention of this Spirit, are united and incorporated into Christ himself, being made living members of his body, partaking a common life and sense with him; by it we are compacted into the same spiritual edifice, dedicated to the worship and inhabitation of God; our bodies and souls are made temples of his divinity, thrones of his majesty, orbs of his celestial light, paradises of his blissful presence; for, *In whom* (saith St. Paul) *ye are built together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit;* and, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*[i]

By the Holy Spirit we are instated in these unconceivably glorious privileges, and by it only we are assured of them, to our comfort; the gift of it as it is a great part of them, and the chief cause, so it is a sure confirmation and pledge: *Ye* (saith St. Paul) *were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance:* and, *It is God who did establish us with you in Christ, and anointed us, and also sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts:*[j] all which phrases do import the same thing, that is, a comfortable assurance concerning the reality of the benefits by divine grace exhibited and promised to us.

2. Neither only relatively and extrinsically is our state bettered and exalted from death to life, from slavery to freedom, from baseness to dignity; but ourselves answerably are changed and amended by the same Holy Spirit, with a real and intrinsical alteration, transforming us into other things, much different from what we were in our former natural state:[k] by that *renovation of the Holy Ghost*, of which St. Paul speaketh, we are, saith he, *renewed in the spirit of our mind;*[l] so that not only the decayed frame of our soul is thereby repaired and reformed, but its powers are much improved and enlarged; we are thence endued with new and better faculties, as it were: with quicker apprehensions, with sincerer judgments, with righter inclina-

[b] Rom. viii. 15.
[c] 2 Tim. ii. 26; Eph. ii. 2.
[d] Rom. viii. 2; 2 Cor. iii. 17.
[e] Eph. ii. 18, 19; Rev. i. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 9.
[f] Rom. viii. 15; John i. 13.
[g] Gal. iv. 6. [h] Rom. viii. 14, 16.
[i] Eph. ii. 22; 1 Cor. iii. 16.
[j] Eph. i. 13; Rom. viii. 9, 11; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. [k] 2 Cor. v. 17.
[l] Tit. iii. 5; Eph. iv. 23.

tions, with nobler passions, than we had before, yea, than we could have had in our original state; so that in the language of holy scripture we thence become *new men, and new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness;* according to God, that is, in conformity to the divine perfections of rectitude in mind and will, so as to resemble God in a higher degree, and more worthy respects, than formerly.[m] Our father Adam was made *εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν*, a creature endued with life and sense, furnished with powers and appetites, disposing to acquire, preserve, and enjoy the conveniences agreeable to that frame;[n] and we naturally are *ψυχικοὶ ἄνθρωποι, animal men;*[o] such as naturally do apprehend, do affect, do pursue things concerning this present life; the pleasures of sense, and the satisfactions of fancy; freedom from want and pain, security from danger and disturbance, together with the means we suppose conducible to those, wealth, honour, and power; these are those *desires of the flesh and of the mind,** the things which according to our natural temper and frame we like and approve; which most men therefore do highly value, passionately love, and earnestly seek: nor doth nature only incline us to a complacence in these things, but customary fruition greatly endeareth them to us; so that we continually improve our acquaintance, and contract a firmer alliance with them; but spiritual and divine things (*the things of the Spirit of God,*† as St. Paul calleth them) we cannot *receive;* that is, simply of ourselves, without aid of another interior principle, we have no capacity to apprehend them, no disposition to entertain them, no strength to pursue them: they, as the apostle saith, *are foolishness to us,* that is, incongruous to our prejudicate notions, and insipid to our corrupt palates.

Such doctrines as these: that our felicity consisteth not in affluence of temporal enjoyments, but in dispositions of soul crossing our humours, curbing our appetites, and quelling our passions; in conformity of practice to rules distasteful to our sense; in the love and favour of an invisible Being; in reversion of an estate not to be possessed until after our death in another world; that none of these present things do well deserve our serious regard, affection, or care, and that it is blameable to be solicitous about them; that naked goodness (how low, weak, and poor soever) is to be chosen before all the specious pomps and glories of this world; that the secret testimony of conscience is to be preferred before all the approbation and applause of men; that the hope of future joy should oversway the desire of present most certain and sensible delights; that the loss of all things may sometime be deemed our greatest gain, being contemned our highest honour, enduring afflictions our most desirable condition, death our surest welfare, a cross preferable to a crown; that accordingly it is often advantageous and expedient for us, and a duty incumbent on us, willingly to discard our dearest contents of life, to sacrifice our most valued interest, to forsake our nearest relations, to refuse what we most affect, to undertake what we most distaste, to undergo without reluctancy or regret the most bitter accidents that can befall us; that we must (to use the holy style) *hate our own souls, deny ourselves, and take up our cross, quit our houses and lands, desert kindred and friends;* *ἀποτάσσεσθαι πᾶσι τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ὑπάρχουσι· to renounce,* or bid farewell to, *all that he hath,* or owneth, *cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes; circumcise our hearts, mortify our members; crucify our flesh, with its affections and lusts; be crucified to the world;* to *account all* worldly *things damage,* dross, and *dung,* in comparison to spiritual goods:[p] that we must so far remit and restrain our self-love, as to love all men, not excluding our greatest enemies, as ourselves: so as not only to part freely with our particular accommodations, but upon occasion, in imitation of our Saviour, to *lay down our lives for them;* so as not only to comport with their infirmities, but to requite their extremest injuries with good-will and good turns; so as to do good to all

* Θελήματα σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν.—Eph. ii. 3.
† Τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ Θεοῦ.—1 Cor. ii. 14.
[m] Eph. iv. 24; 2 Cor. v. 17; Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 23; ii. 10; Col. iii. 10.
[n] 1 Cor. xv. 45.
[o] 1 Cor. ii. 14.
[p] John xii. 25; Luke ix. 23; xiv. 26, 33; Matt. xvi. 24; v. 29; Col. iii. 5; Gal. v. 24; vi. 14; Rom. vi. 6; Phil. iii. 7, 8.

men, to return no evil to any; *to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us.*[q]

These and such like dictates of the Spirit are hard and harsh sayings, absurd to our natural conceit, and abominable to our carnal humour;[r] we cannot readily swallow them, we cannot easily digest them; in respect to them we as mere men ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, *enemies in our mind*, or reason;[s] our discourse presently doth contradict and oppose them; our reason is shut up, and barred with various appetites, humours, and passions against such truths; nor can we admit them into our hearts, except God by his Spirit do *set open our mind*, and work a free passage for them into us; it is *he who commanded light to shine out of darkness*, who must, as St. Paul speaketh, *illustrate our hearts with the knowledge* of these things: an *unction from the holy One*, clearing our eyes, softening our hearts, healing our distempered faculties, must, as St. John informeth us, *teach* and persuade us this sort of truths:[t] a hearty faith of these seemingly incredible propositions must indeed be, as St. Paul calleth it, *the gift of God*, proceeding from that *Spirit of faith*, whereof the same apostle speaketh; such faith is not, as St. Basil saith, *engendered by geometrical necessities, but by the effectual operations of the Holy Ghost:** *Flesh and blood will not reveal unto us, nor can any man* with clear confidence *say, that Jesus* (the author, master, and exemplifier of these doctrines) *is the Lord* (the Messias, the infallible Prophet, the universal Lawgiver, the Son of the living God), *but by the Holy Ghost:*[u] *Every spirit, which* sincerely *confesseth him to be the Christ*, who hath enjoined these precepts, we may with St. John safely conclude to *be of God;*[v] for of ourselves *we are not sufficient* (as the apostle saith) λογίζεσθαί τι, to *reason out*, or collect, any of these things;[w] we never of our own accord, without divine attraction, should *come unto Christ*,[x] that is, should effectually consent unto and embrace his institution, consisting of such unplausible propositions and precepts: hardly would his own disciples, who had so long enjoyed the light of his instruction and conversation, have admitted it, if he had not granted to them that *Spirit of truth*, whose work it was ὁδηγεῖν, to lead them in this unknown and uncouth way, ἀναγγέλλειν, to tell them again and again, that is, to instil and inculcate these crabbed truths upon them, ὑπομιμνήσκειν, to admonish, excite, and urge them to the marking and minding them;[y] hardly, I say, without the guidance of the Spirit, would our Lord's disciples have admitted divers evangelical truths, as our Lord himself told them; *I have* (said he) *many things beside to say to you, but ye cannot as yet bear them: but when he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he shall conduct you into all truth.*[z]

As for the mighty sages of the world, the learned scribes, the subtle disputers, the deep politicians, the *wise men according to the flesh*,[a] the men of most refined judgment, and improved reason in the world's eye, they were more ready to deride than to regard, to impugn than to admit, these doctrines: to the *Greeks who sought wisdom*, the preaching of them did seem *foolishness*.

It is true, some few sparks or flashes of this divine knowledge may possibly be driven out by rational consideration; philosophy may yield some twilight glimmerings thereof; common reason may dictate a faint consent unto, may produce a cold tendency after some of these things: but a clear perception, and a resolute persuasion of mind, that *full assurance of faith*,* and *inflexible confession of hope*,† which the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh of; that *all riches of the full assurance of understanding*, that *abundant knowledge of the divine will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding*,‡

* Πίστις οὐκ ἐν γεωμετρικαῖς ἀνάγκαις, ἀλλ' ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ἐνεργείαις ἐγγινομένη.—Bas. in Ps. cxv.

[q] Matt. v. 44.

[r] John vi. 60.

[s] Col. i. 21.

[t] Διανοίγειν τὸν νοῦν, Luke xxiv. 45; 2 Cor. iv. 6; Acts xvi. 14; 1 John ii. 27.

[u] Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 29; 1 Cor. xii. 9; Πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως, 2 Cor. iv. 13; Matt. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. xii. 3.

[v] 1 John iv. 2.

* Πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως.—Heb. x. 22.

† Ὁμολογία τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀκλινής.—Heb. x. 23.

‡ Πᾶς πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως.—Col. ii. 2.

[w] 2 Cor. iii. 5.

[x] John vi. 44.

[y] John xvi. 13; xiv. 26.

[z] John xvi. 12, 13.

[a] 1 Cor. i. 20, &c.

with which St. Paul did pray that his Colossians might *be replenished;*[b] these so perfect illustrations of the mind, so powerful convictions of the heart, do argue immediate influences from the fountain of life and wisdom, the divine Spirit. No external instruction could infuse, no interior discourse could excite them, could penetrate those opacities of ignorance, and dissipate those thick mists of prejudice, wherein nature and custom do involve us; could so thoroughly awaken the lethargic stupidity of our souls; could supple the refractory stiffness of our wills, could mollify the stony hardness of our hearts, could void our natural aversion to such things, and quell that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *that carnal mind*, the which (St. Paul saith) *is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;*[c] could depress those ὑψώματα, those *lofty towers* of self-conceit, *reared against the knowledge of God;*[d] and *demolish* those ὀχυρώματα, those bulwarks of self-will and perverse stomach opposed against the impressions of divine truth; and *captivate* πᾶν νόημα, *every conceit* and device of ours *to the obedience of Christ* and his discipline. Well, therefore, did St. Paul pray in behalf of his Ephesians, that *God would bestow on them that spirit of wisdom and revelation in the acknowledgment of him, and that the eyes of their mind* (or reason) *might be enlightened, so as to know the hope of their calling;*[e] that is, to understand and believe the doctrines of Christianity, which upon condition of obedience did promise felicity to them.

So is the light of spiritual knowledge together with a temper of mind disposing to receive it, communicated to us; but further also by the same divine power and spirit are our vital heat and vigour, our active strength and courage, imparted. For as mere men, we are not only blind to discern, dull to conceive, backward to undertake the necessary duties of virtue and piety; but we are also dead, heartless, and unwieldly, lame and impotent, indisposed and uncapable to perform them: though we should competently apprehend our duty, and our spirit thence should be *willing;* yet *our flesh*, or natural power, *is weak:*[f] we may, as St. Paul instructeth us, in our judgment consent that *the Law is holy, just, and good:*[g] and consequently *to will may be present to us;* that is, we may be desirous, and in some measure resolved to obey it; yea, we may *have some interior rational complacence therein;*[h] and yet not have ability to act according to these dictates and desires; for *to will is present with me* (saith he in the person of a man endued only with natural strength, abstracting from the subsidiary virtue and operation of the divine Spirit), *but to perform that which is good, I find not;*[i] I perceive not any means or way of effecting it: knowledge, therefore, and willingness to do good, doth not suffice; we need a prevalent force to stir and raise this unwieldly bulk, to overpoise our natural propensions, to subdue the reluctances, and check the importunities of sense, to correct bad nature, and reclaim from bad custom: the natural might and policy of our single reason being very feeble and shallow, is not fitly matched to encounter that potent confederacy of enemies which continually with open violence doth invade and assail us; or which by clandestine wiles doth watch to circumvent and supplant us. Is it easy for us not to dread the frowns, nor to be charmed by the flatteries; to slight both the hatred and favour; to abide the persecutions, and to avoid the allurements of this world; this wicked, violent, deceitful world, which is ever ready to deter from good, and entice us to evil? Is it easy to restrain and repress those *fleshly lusts which* (as St. Peter saith) *do war against our souls,*[j] combating them with their own forces, using their own faculties and members as weapons against them? Is it easy to rescue ourselves from that *other law in our members, that warreth against the law of our understanding, and captivateth us to the law of sin?*[k] Is it a small matter to set upon, to grapple with, to knock down that gigantic Philistine, in-

[b] Col. i. 9.
[c] Rom. viii. 7.
[d] 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.
[e] Eph. i. 17, 18. Τῆς διανοίας.
[f] Matt. xxvi. 41.
[g] Rom. vii. 12, 16, Σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.
[h] Rom. vii. 22, Συνήδομαι τῷ νόμῳ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον.
[i] Rom. vii. 18, Τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν, οὐχ εὑρίσκω.
[j] 1 Pet. ii. 11; James iv. 1.
[k] Rom. vii. 25.

ordinate self-love (the root of injustice, pride, envy, malice, ambition, and avarice, within us), which naturally is so tall and stout; which, if not checked in its progress, will daily grow in stature and strength? Is it a slight business to detect, to counterplot, to decline or defeat those *μεθοδείαι*, those *devices*, or *subtile trains*, and sleights of the tempter; *to wrestle with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this darksome world, with the spiritualities of wickedness* surrounding us?[l] May we not reasonably, in comparison to these mighty Anakim, be (as the children of Israel anciently were) *in our own sight as grasshoppers*,[m] quite despairing by our own strength to vanquish, to resist them?

In our spiritual conflict with such dangerous and dreadful adversaries, we do need an *ἐπιχορηγία τοῦ πνεύματος*, as St. Paul speaketh, that is, *a large supply of the Spirit*,[n] a collation of auxiliary forces, an habitual support derived from that invincible and infallible Spirit, which only is stronger and wiser than they; we need to be armed with that *δύναμις ἐξ ὕψους*, that *power from on high*,[o] or heavenly might, whereby the apostles were enabled to fight their noble battles, and to achieve their glorious conquests, subduing the rebellious world, and baffling the powers of darkness; we need *δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι*, *to be strengthened with might by Christ's Spirit in the inward man*,[p] as St. Paul expresseth it; whereby, as he, we may *πάντα ἰσχύειν*, be *able to do all things*,[q] or to accomplish the most difficult parts of our duty; without which *we can do nothing*, that is, cannot discharge the most easy things required of us; *all our sufficiency is of God;* it is he, who *out of his goodness doth effect in us both to will and to perform;* his Spirit *taking part with our infirmities*, and thereby giving us advantage over all opposition and difficulty.[r] The chief reason why we *do not sin*, or persist in a course of disobedience to the laws of God, is, as St. John telleth us, *because the divine seed abideth in us*,[s] that root of divine life and vital activity implanted in us by the Holy Spirit; that *divine nature* (as St. Peter styleth it), that principle and spring of spiritual motion by him inserted in us; from which only seed or nature do sprout all heavenly graces and virtues.*

The principal and original virtue, charity (*the root, the fountain, the mother of all goodness*, as St. Chrysostom calleth it,†) even that *is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us*,[t] as St. Paul telleth us; and the *fruit* (saith he) *of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth;* and *love, peace, longsuffering, benignity, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*,[v] are by the same divine apostle reckoned streams from the same source, fruits of the same rich and goodly stock: to it generally are attributed all purification of our hearts, mortification of our lusts, sanctification of our lives, and consequently salvation of our souls: *Ye* (saith St. Paul) *are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;* and, *God hath chosen us from the beginning to salvation by sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth;* and, *Having* (saith St. Peter) *purified our souls in obedience to the truth, by the Spirit, unto charity unfeigned;* and, *If* (saith St. Paul again) *by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live:*[w] thus doth our spiritual being and state, together with our life and active powers, depend upon the Holy Spirit; and not only so; but,

3. The continued subsistence and preservation, the actual use and exercise of them, all our discreet conduct, all our good practice, do rely upon him: it is true of our spiritual, no less than of our natural life, *If he doth avert his face, we are troubled; if he doth subtract his influence, we die, and return unto our*

[l] Eph. vi. 11, 12.
[m] Num. xiii. 33.
[n] Phil. i. 19.
[o] Luke xxiv. 49; (Isa. lix. 19.)
[p] Eph. iii. 16; Col. i. 11.
[q] Phil. iv. 13.
[r] John xv. 5; 2 Cor. iii. 5; Phil. ii. 13; Τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν, Rom. viii. 26.

* Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπαλλαγῆναι ἄνευ τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐνεργείας.—Chrys.
1 Pet. i. 23; 2 Pet. i. 4, Θεία φύσις.—Vis divinæ gratiæ, potentior utique natura.—*Tertull.*
† Ρίζα, καὶ πηγὴ, καὶ μήτηρ ἁπάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν. —Chrys.
[s] 1 John iii. 9.
[t] Rom. v. 5.
[v] Eph. v. 9; Gal. v. 22.
[w] 1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 22; Rom. viii. 13.

dust:[x] upon all occasions we do need his direction, aid, and comfort; for *the way of man* (as the prophet saith) *is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps: It is the Lord* (as the Psalmist saith) *that ordereth the steps of a good man, and upholdeth him with his hand.*[y] We have all need to pray with that good man, *Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.*[z]

We are vain and uncertain in our opinions, fickle and irresolute in our purposes, slow and heavy in our proceedings; apt to faint and falter, to stumble and slip in all our practice; we do need therefore this sure oracle to consult in our doubts and darknesses; this faithful friend to direct and advise us in our affairs; this constant monitor to rouse and quicken us in our undertakings; this powerful guardian to support and establish us in our ways: it is, in respect to good men, this steady hand that holdeth the helm, and gently steereth their course through the blind tracks of religious practice; withdrawing them from those dangerous shelves of error and temptation, upon which they are apt to split: it is this heavenly gale, that filleth their sails with constant resolution, and fairly driveth them forward in their voyage toward eternal bliss. He softly doth whisper and insinuate good thoughts into us; doth kindle pious desires, doth cherish virtuous intentions, doth promote honest endeavours; he seasonably checketh and restraineth us from sin; he faithfully reproveth and upbraideth us for committing it; he raiseth wholesome remorse, shame, and displeasure for our unworthiness and folly; he sweetly warmeth our cold affections, inflaming our hearts with devotion toward God; he qualifieth us, and encourageth us to approach the throne of grace, breeding in us faith and humble confidence, prompting us fit matter of request, becoming our advocate and intercessor for the good success of our prayers: *Through Christ Jesus* (saith St. Paul) *we have access by one Spirit unto the Father;* and, *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should ask for as we ought; but the Spirit itself intercedeth for us.*[a]

He guardeth us, he standeth by us, he sustaineth us in all trials and temptations, affording *grace sufficient* to escape or to endure them; *not suffering us to be tempted above what we are able.*[b]

He supporteth and comforteth us in our afflictions and distresses of all kinds, of our inward and outward estate; this David knew when in his penitential agonies he prayed, *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit:*[c] this those first Christians felt, who, under persecutions and all outward discouragements, were yet *filled with joy*, and *did walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost:*[d] whence that testimony of St. Paul concerning the Thessalonians; *Ye were followers of me, and of the Lord, receiving the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:*[e] by it the blessed saints, martyrs, and confessors, being inspired, did, not only with admirable patience, but incredible alacrity, undergo the extremest losses, ignominies, and tortures, which the spite of hell and rage of the world could inflict on them.

It is, in fine, this Holy Spirit which is the sole author and spring of all true delight, of all real content within us; of that *unspeakable joy in believing*, that *gayety of hope*, that satisfaction in well doing:[f] the partaking of his society, influence, and consolation, is indeed the most delicious repast and richest cordial of our soul; the nearest resemblance, the sweetest foretaste of paradise.

So many, so great; yea far more, far greater than, should the time give me leave, I could enumerate or express, are the benefits accruing to us from this most excellent gift of God, by him graciously conferred upon all good Christians; for which we should correspondently endeavour with all our hearts to praise and thank him; in all our lives to make grate-

[x] Psal. civ. 29.
[y] Jer. x. 23; Psal. xxxvii. 23.
[z] Psal. cxliii. 8, 10.

[a] Eph. ii. 18; Rom. viii. 26.
[b] 2 Cor. xii. 9; 1 Cor. x. 13.
[c] Psal. li. 11, 12.
[d] Acts xiii. 52; ix. 31, &c.
[e] 1 Thess. i. 6.
[f] 1 Pet. i. 8; Rom. xv. 13; Heb. iii. 6.

ful and worthy returns for it; especially by well using it to the greatest purposes, for which it was bestowed, of enabling us to serve God, of preserving us from sin, of conducting us to eternal salvation.

Let us earnestly invite this holy guest unto us, by our prayers unto him who hath promised to bestow his Spirit upon those which ask it, to impart *this living stream* to every one which *thirsteth* after it;[g] let us willingly receive him into our hearts, let us treat him with all kind usage, with all humble observance. Let us not exclude him by supine neglect or rude *resistance;* let us not *grieve* him by our perverse and froward behaviour toward him; let us not *tempt him* by our fond presumptions or base treacheries; let us not *quench* his heavenly light and heat by our foul lusts and passions:[h] but let us admit gladly his gentle illapses; let us hearken to his faithful suggestions; let us comply with his kindly motions; let us demean ourselves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him: that we may so do, God of his infinite mercy grant unto us, through *Jesus Christ our Lord;* to whom, with the same *Holy Spirit*, for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and because, through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may please thee both in will and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[g] Luke xi. 13; John vii. 37, 38, 39.
[h] Acts vii. 51; Eph. iv. 30; Isa. lxiii. 10; Acts v. 9; 1 Thess. v. 19.

A DEFENCE

OF THE

BLESSED TRINITY.

TRINITY SUNDAY, 1663.

Φύσει μὲν ἅπας λόγος σαθρὸς καὶ εὐκίνητος, καὶ διὰ τὸν ἀντιμαχόμενον λόγον ἐλευθερίαν οὐκ ἔχων· ὁ δὲ περὶ Θεοῦ τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον, ὅσῳ μεῖζον τὸ ὑποκείμενον, καὶ ὁ ζῆλος πλείων, καὶ ὁ κίνδυνος χαλεπώτερος· καὶ γὰρ νοῆσαι χαλεπὸν, καὶ ἑρμηνεῦσαι ἀμήχανον, καὶ ἀκοῆς κεκαθαρμένης ἐπιτυχεῖν ἐργωδέστερον.—Greg. Naz. Orat. 26.

COLOSS. iii. 2.—*Set your affections on things above.**

FOR understanding this apostolical precept, two particulars must be considered: first the act, φρονεῖν (which rendered, to *set our affections;*) then the object, τὰ ἄνω, *things above:* these we briefly shall explain.

The word φρονεῖν doth primarily, and also according to common use, denote an advertency, or intent application of the mind upon any object: of the mind, that is, of a man's soul, especially of its rational part; so as to include the powers of understanding, will, affection, activity: whence it may imply direction of our understanding to know; of our will to choose and embrace; of our affection to love, desire, relish; of our activity to pursue any good (real or apparent) which is proposed: according to which most comprehensive sense (suiting the nature of the thing) I do take the word, supposing that St. Paul doth enjoin us to employ all our mental faculties in study, choice, passion, endeavour upon supernal things.

The τὰ ἄνω (things above) may be so taken as to import all things relating to our spiritual life here, our future state hereafter; the which do either actually subsist above in heaven, or have a final reference thither: so they may comprise—1. The substantial beings, to whom we stand related, owe respect, perform duty; 2. The state and condition of our spiritual life here, or hereafter, as we are servants and subjects of God, citizens of heaven, candidates of immortal happiness; 3. Rules to be ob-

* Φρονεῖτε τὰ ἄνω.

served, qualities to be acquired, actions to be performed, means to be used by us, in regard to the superior place and state.

Of these things, the incomparably principal and supreme, the τὸ ὑπεροάνω, is the ever most glorious and blessed Trinity; to the minding of which this day is peculiarly dedicated, and the which indeed is always the most excellent, most beneficial, most comfortable object of our contemplation and affection; wherefore upon it I shall now immediately fix my discourse.

The sacred Trinity may be considered, either as it is in itself wrapt up in unexplicable folds of mystery; or as it hath discovered itself operating in wonderful methods of grace towards us.

As it is in itself, it is an object too bright and dazzling for our weak eye to fasten upon, an abyss too deep for our short reason to fathom: I can only say, that we are so bound to mind it, as to exercise our faith, and express our humility, in willingly believing, in submissively adoring those high mysteries which are revealed in the holy oracles concerning it, by that Spirit itself, *which searcheth the depths of God*, and by that only Son of God, who residing in his Father's bosom, hath thence brought them forth, and *expounded them*[a] to us, so far as was fit for our capacity and use: and the lectures so read by the eternal *wisdom of God*, the propositions uttered by the mouth of *truth itself*, we are obliged with a docile ear, and a credulous heart, to entertain.

That there is one Divine Nature or Essence, common unto three Persons incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different from other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one;[b] a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession, without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence: these are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree, but should not stagger our faith in assenting that they are true; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with dispositions to admire, veiling our faces in the presence, and prostrating our reason at the feet of wisdom so far transcending us.

There be those who, because they cannot untie, dare to cut in sunder these sacred knots; who, because they cannot fully conceive it, dare flatly to deny them; who, instead of confessing their own infirmity, do charge the plain doctrines and assertions of holy scripture with impossibility. Others seem to think they can demonstrate these mysteries by arguments grounded upon principles of natural light; and express it by similitudes derived from common experience. To repress the presumption of the former, and to restrain the curiosity of the latter, the following considerations (improved by your thoughts) may perhaps somewhat conduce.

1. We may consider, that our reason is no competent or capable judge concerning propositions of this nature: *Our breast* (as Minutius speaketh) *is a narrow vessel, that will not hold much understanding;** it is not sufficient, nor was ever designed, to sound such depths, to descry the radical principles of all being, to reach the extreme possibilities of things. Such an intellectual capacity is vouchsafed to us as doth suit to our degree (the lowest rank of intelligent creatures), as becometh our station in this inferior part of the world, as may qualify us to discharge the petty businesses committed to our management, and the facile duties incumbent on us: but to know what God is,† how he subsisteth, what he can, what he should do, by our natural perspicacity, or by any means we can use, further than he pleaseth to reveal, doth not suit to the meanness of our condition, or the narrowness of our

[a] Ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο, John i. 18.
[b] John x. 38; xiv. 10; xvii. 21.

* Nobis ad intellectum pectus angustum est, &c.—*Min. Felix.*

† Τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν, καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν.—Plato in Tim.

capacity; these really are the most elevated sublimities, and the abstrusest subtilties that are, or can be, in the nature of things: he that can penetrate them, may erect his tribunal any where in the world, and pretend justly that nothing in heaven or earth is exempted from his judgment. But, in truth, how unfit our reason is to exercise such universal jurisdiction, we may discern by comparing it to our sense: it is obvious that many beasts do (by advantage of a finer sense) see, hear, smell things imperceptible to us: and were it not very unreasonable to conclude that such things do not exist, or are in themselves altogether insensible, because they do not at all appear to us? Is it not evident that we ought to impute their imperceptibility (respecting us) to the defect of our sense, to its dullness and grossness, in regard to the subtilty of those objects? Even so many propositions in themselves, and in regard to the capacity of higher understandings (for there are gradual differences in understanding, as well as in sense), be true and very intelligible, which to our inferior reason seem unintelligible, or repugnant to the pre-notions with which our soul is imbued; and our not discerning those truths may argue the blindness and weakness of our understanding, not any fault or inconsistency in the things themselves; nor should it cause us anywise to distrust them, if they come recommended to our belief by competent authority.

To such purposes indeed the holy scripture frequently doth vilify our reason and knowledge: *Every man* (saith Jeremiah) *is brutish in knowledge. The Lord* (saith the Psalmist) *knoweth the thoughts of men* (*of wise men*, as St. Paul quoteth it), *that they are vanity. Vain man* (saith he in Job) *would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt;* that is, however we affect to seem wise, yet to be dull as an ass, to be wild as a colt, is natural to us. *My thoughts* (saith God in the prophet) *are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*[d] God's wisdom is as the heavens, the highest and top of all wisdom; man's as the earth, beneath which there is no degree, but that of hell and darkness: we therefore in this respect are unfit to determine concerning things so exceedingly sublime and subtile.

2. We may consider, that not only the imperfection of our reason itself, but the manner of using it, doth incapacitate us to judge about these matters. Had we competent skill to sail in this deep ocean, yet we do want a gale to drive us, and a compass to steer our course by therein; we have not any firm grounds to build our judgment on, or certain rules to square it by. We cannot effectually discourse or determine upon any subject, without having principles homogeneous and pertinent thereto (that are ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ συγγενείᾳ, cognate and congruous to the subject-matter, as the philosopher speaketh[e]) upon which to found our argumentation. Now all the principles we can have are either originally innate to our minds, or afterward immediately infused by God, or by external instruction from him disclosed to us, or acquired by our experience, and observation of things incurring our sense; or framed by our reason, comparing those means; of which the three former sorts are most arbitrarily communicated and both for number and kind depend upon the free pleasure of him, who distributeth them according *to a measure** suitable to each man's occasions, estimated by himself. How many those are, and how far they may qualify us to judge or discourse about those transcendent matters, is hard to define; but most certainly they never can clash with one another; no light in any manner imparted by God can obscure the doctrine declared by him, no doctrine can thwart principles instilled by him. The latter sorts appertain only to material and sensible objects; which therefore can only enable us to deduce, or to examine conclusions relating to them; and being applied to things of another kind, are abused, so as to become apt to produce great mistakes: as, for instance, most ancient philosophers observing that the changes and vicissitudes in nature were generally by the same matters undergo-

[c] Jer. x. 14; Psal ciii. 14; 1 Cor. iii. 20; Job xi. 12.

[d] Isa. lv. 8, 9.

* Ὡς ἑκάστῳ Θεὸς ἐμέριζε μέτρον, Rom. xii. 3.

[e] Annal. i. 7.

ing several alterations, or putting on different shapes; and that bodies once being in rest did usually consist in that state, until by impulse of other bodies they were put into motion; did thence frame such axioms, or principles of discourse, *Ex nihilo nihil fit;* and *Quicquid movetur, ab alio movetur:* which propositions, supposing them true in relation to the present conditions and powers of sensible things, yet were it unlawful to stretch them unto beings of another kind and nature (to beings immaterial and insensible), or to infer thence generally, that in the utmost possibility of things there is not any creative or any self-motive power: even as from the like premises it would be vain to conclude, that there be no other beings subsistent beside those which strike our senses, or discover themselves by sensible effects. In like manner, it cannot be reasonable, out of principles drawn from ordinary experience, about these most low and imperfect things, to collect, that there can be no other kind of unions, of distinctions, of generations, of processions, than such as our own gross sense doth represent to us:* reason itself more forcibly doth oblige us to think that to sublimer beings there do pertain modes of existence and action, unions and distinctions, influences and emanations, of a more high and perfect kind, such as our coarse apprehension cannot adequate, nor our rude language express; which we, perhaps, have no faculty subtile enough to conceive distinctly, nor can attain any congruous principles, from which to discourse solidly about them.† To judge of these things, if we will not, against the philosopher's rule, *μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος, shift kinds*, or use improper and impertinent arguments, we must *compare spiritual things with spiritual*,‡ so as to draw conclusions about spirituals only from principles revealed by God's Spirit, the sole master of spiritual science; so also as to express them not *ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, in terms devised by human wisdom*, but in such as the Holy Spirit hath suggested; for *ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος*, a man endowed merely with common sense (or natural reason) cannot *δέχεσθαι, apprehend*, or perceive those *things of God, which only the Spirit of God doth know.* To improve and press which consideration further,

3. We may consider the weakness and shortness of our reason, even about things most familar and easy to us; the little or nothing we by our utmost diligence can attain to know, concerning their intrinsic essences, their properties, their causes and manners of production. What do we more commonly hear, than earnest complaints from the most industrious searchers of natural knowledge concerning the great obscurity of nature, the difficulty of finding truth, the blindness of our mind, and impotency of our reason? And should they be silent, yet experience plainly would speak how difficult, if not impossible, it is, to arrive unto any clear and sure knowledge of these common objects; seeing the most sedulous inquiries, undertaken by the choicest wits for above two thousand years, have scarce perhaps exhibited one unquestionable theorem in natural philosophy, one unexceptionable maxim of ethical prudence or policy; all things being still exposed to doubt and dispute, as they were of old, when first admiration and curiosity did prompt men to hunt after the causes of things: the most, however, that after all our care and toil we can perceive, doth not exceed some faint colours, some superficial figures, some gross effects of things, while their radical properties and their immediate causes remain enveloped and debarred from our sight in unaccessible darkness.* Shall we then, who cannot pierce into the nature of a pebble, that cannot apprehend how a mushroom doth grow, that are baffled in our philosophy about a gnat, or a worm, debate and decide (beyond what is taught us from above) concerning the precise manner of divine essence, subsistence, or generation? *I do* (saith Chrysostom) *eat meats;*

* Id quod Deus est, secundum id quod est nec humano sermone edici, nec humanis auribus percipi, nec humanis sensibus colligi potest.—*Novat. de Trin.* cap. 7.——Ὠνομάσαμεν γὰρ ὡς ἡμῖν ἐφικτόν, ἐκ τῶν ἡμετέρων τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ.—Naz. Or. 37, de Sp. S.

† Cum quæritur quid tres, magna inopia humanum laborat eloquium; dictum est tamen tres Personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur.—*Aug. de Trin.* 5, 9.——Κύριον ὄνομα τῶν νοητῶν καὶ ἀσωμάτων οὐδέν.—Naz. Grat. 45, (ad Evagr.)

‡ Πνευματικὰ πνευματικοῖς συγκρίνειν.—1 Cor. ii. 13.

* Κενούσθω σοι τὸ φιλότιμον ἐν ἀκινδύνοις.—Gteg. Naz. Or. 26.

*but how they are divided into phlegm, into blood, into juice, into choler, I am ignorant; these things, which every day we see and taste, we do not know; and are we curious about the essence of God?** We are (as Aristotle, himself no dunce, no idiot, doth confess) but *owl-eyed, πρὸς τὰ τῇ φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων, in regard to things naturally most evident*, and palpable;[f] and can we be such Lynceus's, as to see through the furthest recesses of infinity? *Hardly* (saith the Wisdom of Solomon) *do we guess aright of things upon the earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out?*[g] Yea, and the genuine Solomon himself, *I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me: that which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?*[h] What is more remote, what more profound, than God's nature? who then can find it out? Sooner with our hands may we touch the extreme surface of the skies, sooner with our eyes may we pierce to the centre of the earth: so it is expressly told to us in Job: *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?*[i]

4. It may be considered, that we daily see and observe things, which, did not manifest experience convince us of their being, we should be apt to disbelieve their possibility; sense, no less than faith, doth present us with objects, to bare reason improbable and unconceivable; so that should we attend to the scruples injected thereby, we should hardly take things for possible which we behold existent; we should distrust the greatest evidence of sense, and by our logic put out our eyes. Who would believe, that, did he not every day see it; who can conceive how, although he seeth it, from a little dry, ill-favoured, insipid seed thrown into the earth, there shortly would rise so goodly a plant, endued with so exact figure, so fragrant smell, so delicate taste, so lively colour; by what engines it attracteth, by what discretion it culleth out, by what hands it mouldeth, its proper aliment; by what artifice it doth elaborate the same so curiously, and incorporate it with itself? What virtue could we imagine in nature able to digest an earthy juice into the pellucid clearness of crystal, into the invincible firmness of a diamond? Who would not be an infidel, did not his sight assure him of the miracles achieved by that blind plastic force, which without eye or hand doth frame such varieties of exquisite workmanship, inimitable, and far surpassing the skill of the greatest artist? That a little star, from so vast a distance, in a moment should make impression on our eyes, replenishing with its light or image so spacious a region all about it, were we blind we should hardly believe, we scarce could fancy: how, without knowing the organs of speech, or the manner of applying them, without any care or pain employed by us, we so conform our voice, as to express what word, what accent we please; how we do this, or that we can do it, as it will confound our thought to imagine, so it would stagger our faith to believe, did not our conscience persuade us that we can and do speak. It is upon occasion very commonly said, I should never have believed it, had I not seen it; and that men speak so in earnest, many such instances declare. Now if we can give credit to our sense against the suffrage or scruple of our reason in things not so discosted from our capacity of knowledge, shall we not much more yield our belief unto God's express words in things so infinitely distant from it? If common experience can subdue our judgments, and compel us to a belief of things incredible, shall our reason demur at submitting to divine authority? If the dictate of our conscience doth convince us, shall not we much more surrender to the testimony of God, who *is greater than our conscience, and knoweth all things?*[k] If we do believe, because we seem to know by seeing ourselves; we should rather believe, because we surely know by hearing from God: for sense may deceive us, and often needeth correction

* Βρώματα ἰσθίω, τὸ δὲ πῶς μερίζονται εἰς φλέγμα, εἰς αἷμα, εἰς χυμὸν, εἰς χολὴν, ἀγνοῶ· ταῦτα ἅπερ βλέπομεν καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν ἐσθίοντες ἀγνοοῦμεν, καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ πολυπραγμονοῦμεν; Chrys. Περὶ ἀκαταλήπτου. α'.

[f] Arist. Met. ii. 1.
[g] Wisd. ix. 13.
[h] Eccles. vii. 23, 24.
[i] Job xi. 7, 8.
[k] 1 John iii. 20.

from reason; God cannot deceive, and reason often is by him corrected: which leadeth me to a further consideration, that,

5. The propositions clearly delivered unto us by God himself, are upon many accounts more unquestionably true, more credible than the experiments of any sense, or principles of any science: whence, if there happen to arise any seeming contest between these, a precedence is due to the former in derogation to the latter; it is fit that we rather give our eyes and our ears, our fancies and our reasons, the lie, than anywise, by diffidence to his word, put an affront on God (for to disbelieve him is, as St. John telleth us, to give him the lie;) *τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, the folly of God* (as St. Paul speaketh;[1]) that is, the points of faith declared by God, which seem most irrational and cross to the decrees of human wisdom) *is σοφώτερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων, wiser than men;* that is, more assuredly consonant to real truth, than our most undoubted theorems of science, and most current maxims of policy. God is the *Father of all lights*, both of that which immediately shineth from heaven, and of that which glimmereth here below; he is the fountain of all truth, whether natural or supernatural: but his light and his truth he conveyeth into us by manners different: some light streameth directly from him, other cometh obliquely, being refracted through divers mediums, or reflected from several objects upon us: the first sort must needs be more bright, and more pure, should be more powerful and efficacious upon our minds; the latter is often blended with material tinctures, is weakened by the interruptions it meeteth with, loseth of its purity and its force by the many conduits it passeth through, by the many shades it mixeth with. Observations of sense do often prove fallacious; and their not ever doing so dependeth upon divers conditions, a right temper of the organ, a fit disposition of the medium, a just distance of the object; so that conclusions derived from them cannot be so absolutely certain, nor consequently the principles grounded on them. But divine revelation is not obnoxious to such conditions: as the doctrines revealed are in themselves simply true, according to the highest pitch of necessity, because supreme wisdom doth conceive them, and truth itself doth vent them; so the manner of declaring them must be competent, because God himself doth choose and use it; there plainly needeth no more, than yielding an attentive ear, and skill in the language wherein they are expressed, to secure us from error and uncertainty about them; so that well might St. Austin say, that *in other things our conjecture is exercised; but faith alone doth assure our mind.**

There have been those, you know, who have not only advanced doubts concerning propositions attested to by clearest sense, and inferred by strongest discourse; but have by their argute cavillations bid fair to shake the foundations of all human science: but I never heard of any, who believed a God to be, that did contest the infallible truth of his oracles: Socrates, we may be sure (his excellent scholar assuring us), who was so incredulous as to disclaim all pretence to wisdom or science, being author of the famous saying, *Hoc tantum scio;* yet greatly did rely upon divine significations and testimonies, so deemed by him, and such as he could come at; alleging, that he who followeth the conduct of his own reason, instead of God's direction, chooseth a blind and ignorant guide, before one that best seeth and knoweth the way, *He* (saith the historian) *despised all human conceits in respect of God's advice.*†

He that formeth the eye (saith the Psalmist) *shall not he see? He that planteth the ear, shall not he hear? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?*[m] He that endued us with all our knowing faculties, and presideth over us in the management of them, shall not he supereminently know all that we can? Must not they in reason continue subordinate to his direction? Should they not always discern and judge under correction by him, with an appeal and submission reserved to his better judgment?

I might adjoin, that the object and the

[1] 1 John v. 10; 1 Cor. i. 25.

* Ad cætera exercemur per fortasse; at cum de rebus fidei agitur, ibi est certe sine forte.—*Aug.*

† Αὐτὸς δὲ πάντ' ἀνθρώπινα ὑπερεώρα πρὸς τὴν παρὰ τῶν Θεῶν ξυμβουλίαν.

[m] Psal. xciv. 9, 10.

end (as well as the author and the manner) of divine revelation doth argue it to surpass all reason, and all sense, in certainty and credibility; for sense and reason converse wholly, or chiefly, about objects material and mutable; revelation about immaterial and immutable things: they direct us in affairs concerning this transitory life; this leadeth us toward eternal felicity. To mistake about those objects, to miscarry in those affairs, is in itself of little, in comparison of no importance: but to judge rightly about these things, to tread safely in these paths, is of infinitely vast concernment; a smaller competency, therefore, of light and certainty, might well suffice to the purposes of reason and sense; but to faith the greatest degree of assurance is worthily due, and seemeth requisite. But further,

6. Not only the consideration of this mystery, but of all the divine attributes, will in like manner extort from our feeble reason the question of Nicodemus, *How can these things be?*[n] They will all of them equally puzzle our shallow imagination, and baffle our slender understanding: for who can imagine, or understand, how God's immensity doth consist with his perfect simplicity; or that without any parts he doth coexist to all possible extension of matter; being all here, and wholly there, and immensely every where? Who can apprehend his indivisible eternity, or how all successions of time are ever present to him, and subject to his view; so that he is not older now than he was when the world began, nor younger than he will be after innumerable ages are past; his omniscience, so that he forseeth the most contingent events, depending upon causes in their nature arbitrary and indeterminate? Who can fancy, how out of mere nothing, or out of extreme confusion and indisposedness, the world could be created and framed into so goodly order, by a mere act of will, or by the bare speaking of a word? How without any distraction of thought he governeth affairs, attending the infinite varieties of thoughts, words, and actions occurring here; and *ita gurans universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos*, as St. Austin speaketh?[o] How he is truly said to resolve and to reverse, to love and hate, to be pleased and grieved, all without any real change, or *shadow of alteration*? How he suffereth many things to happen which extremely displease him, and which he can easily hinder; and doth not effect many things which are much desired by him, and very feasible to his power? Why to equal men he distributeth his gifts so unequally; affording to divers abundant means of becoming happy, leaving others destitute of them? What wit of man can reconcile his infinite benignity with his most severe decrees; or compose the seeming differences between his mercy and his justice? Many such perfections and dispensations of God we must steadfastly believe, because they are plainly taught in scripture; to distrust them, being to renounce Christianity: to deny them, being to raze up the very foundations of our religion; yet he that shall with his utmost attention of mind endeavour to conceive how they can be, or how they consist together, according to our ordinary notions of things, and the vulgar meaning of words, applied by us to these inferior matters, shall find himself gravelled with innumerable semblances of contradiction, plunged in depths inscrutable, involved in labyrinths inextricable.

What in practice the cross of Christ was, *a scandal to Jews* (men dull, but obstinate, and invincibly possessed by vain prejudices), and *folly to Greeks** (men of wit and subtilty, but overweeningly conceited of them), that in speculation may a great part of divine truths be, apt to stumble froward and arrogant men; but as there, so here, *blessed are they who are not scandalized;* whom no fond scruple or haughty conceit can pervert from readily embracing all necessary verities; such are those we pointed at, which if without extreme folly and impiety we cannot reject, or be diffident of, although surmounting our conceit, and dazzling our reason; then

[n] John iii. 9.

* Πλέον ἐστὶ τοῦ περὶ Μουσικῶν ἀμούσους, καὶ πολεμικῶν ἀστρατεύτους διαλέγεσθαι, τὰ τὰ θεῖα καὶ δαιμόνια πράγματα διασκοπεῖν ἀνθρώπους ὄντας, οἷον ἀτέχνους τεχνιτῶν διάνοιαν ἀπὸ δόξης καὶ διανοίας κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸν μετιόντας.—Plut. de sera Num. Vind.

[o] Confess. iii. 11.

upon the same account, with like felicity we must submit our faith to the doctrines concerning the blessed Trinity, standing upon the same authority.

7. Lastly, we may consider and meditate upon the total incomprehensibility of God in all things belonging to him;* in his nature, his attributes, his decrees, his works and ways; which all are full of depth, mystery, and wonder. God *inhabiteth* φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, *a light inaccessible* to the dim and weak sight of mortal eyes;[p] which *no man hath seen, nor can see: No man* (as he told his servant Moses) *can see his face* (the very exterior appearance of him) *and live:*[q] he is *a consuming fire*, that will scorch and devour such as by rash inquiries approach too near him;† *the sight* (it is said) *of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the sight of the children of Israel.*[r] Even those spiritual eagles, the quick and strong-sighted seraphims, are obliged to *cover their faces*, as not daring to look upon, nor able to sustain the fulgor of his immediate presence, the flashes of glory and majesty issuing from his throne:[s] and the most illuminate secretaries of heaven, unto whom secrets were disclosed, into which *angels themselves were ambitious to pry*,[t] were sometimes nonplused in contemplation of God's attributes and actions; being in their astonishment forced to cry out, Ὦ βάθος, *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*[u] Even his methods of exterior providence are inscrutably mysterious; *his judgments are* ἀνεξερεύνητα, like inexhaustible mines, to the bottom whereof we cannot anywise dig by our inquiry; *his paths are* ἀνεξιχνίαστοι, so obscure as not to be traced by any footsteps of our discourse; *his gifts are* ἀνεκδιήγητοι, not to be interpreted, or expressed by our language.[v] And if all concerning God be thus incomprehensible, why should any thing seem incredible? Why out of so many unconceivable mysteries do we choose some, reprobate others?* Wherefore do we stretch our judgment beyond its limits to things so infinitely exceeding it?† Why do we suffer our reason to be pragmatical, unjustly invading the office not belonging thereto; *intruding into things which it hath not seen*, nor can comprehend; those *secret things which belong to the Lord our God*,[w] and the comprehension whereof he hath reserved unto himself?

These considerations may suffice in some manner to show, that St. Chrysostom had reason to exclaim so much against the madness, as he styleth it, of those who do πολυπραγμονεῖν τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *are busily curious in speculation about the essence of God;* daring, τοῖς οἰκείοις ὑποβάλλειν λογισμοῖς, *to subject divine mysteries to their own ratiocinations:*‡ that St. Basil's advice was wholesome, μὴ περιεργάζεσθαι τὰ σιωπώμενα, *not to be meddlesome about things, about which holy scripture is silent:* that another ancient writer did say no less truly than prettily, that in these matters *curiositas reum facit, non peritum:* we may easilier incur blame than attain skill by nice inquiry into them:§ that many of the Fathers do with great wisdom dislike and dissuade the searching τὸ πῶς,‖ the manner of things being true, or possible, as a suspicious mark, or a dangerous motive of infidelity: that St. Paul's rules, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *to be wise so as withal to be sober*, and modest; and μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὁ γέγραπται, *not to conceit any thing without warrant of scripture*, are in this case most especially to be heeded:[x] that, according to St. Peter's

* Εἰ γὰρ αἱ οἰκονομιαὶ ἀκατάληπτοι, πολλῷ μᾶλλον αὐτός.—Chrys. Ἀκατ. α'.

† Scrutator majestatis opprimetur a gloria. —*Aug.*

[p] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [q] Exod. xxxiii. 23.
[r] Deut. iv. 24; Exod. xxiv. 17.
[s] Isa. vi. 2. [t] 1 Pet. i. 12.
[u] Rom. xi. 33. [v] 2 Cor. ix. 15

* Τί πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀνίπτασαι πεζὸς ὤν; τί καὶ σὺ μετρεῖς τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν σπιθαμῇ, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν δρακί;—Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

† Δόξη ἐστὶν ἀχώρητος, μεγέθει ἀκατάληπτος, ὕψει ἀπερινόητος, σοφίᾳ ἀσυμβίβαστος, ἀγαθωσύνῃ ἀμέμπτος, καλοποιΐᾳ ἀνεκδιήγητος.—Theoph. ad Autol.

‡ Μάνιαν γὰρ ἔγωγε εἶναι ἐσχάτην φημὶ φιγονεικεῖν εἰδέναι τί τὴν οὐσίαν ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός.—Chrys. περὶ Ἀκαταλ. α'.

Cogitemus si valemus, si non valemus credamus.—*Aug. Serm.* 5, *de Temp.*

Τίς ἡ τοιαύτη ὑμῶν φιλονεικία τῶν ἐφευρέστεων ὥστε ἀνθρωπίνῃ φρονήσει ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην νόησιν ὁρίζεσθαι.—than. t. i. 625.

§ Zeno Veronens.

‖ Σαφὴς ἔλεγχος ἀπιστίας τὸ πῶς περὶ Θεοῦ λέγειν.—Expos. Fid. apud Just. M.

[w] Col. ii. 18; Deut. xxix. 29.
[x] Rom. xii. 3; 1 Cor. iv. 6.

admonition, we should *as new-born babes* (unprepossessed with any notions or fancies of our own) *long for and greedily suck in the sincere milk of the word;*[y] not diluting it with baser liquors of human device: that where God doth interpose his definitive sentence, our reason hath nothing to do but to attend and submit; no right to vote, no licence to debate the matter; its duty is to listen and approve whatever God speaketh, to read and subscribe to whatever he writeth; at least in any case it should be mute, or ready to follow Job, saying, *Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.*[x] In fine, the testimony of God, with a sufficient clearness represented to the capacity of an honest and docile mind (void of all partial respects, and clear from all sorts of prejudice; loving truth, and forward to entertain it; abhorring to wrest or wrack things, to use any fraud or violence upon any principle, or ground of truth;) the testimony of God, I say, so revealed, whatever exception our shallow reason can thrust in, should absolutely convince our judgments, and constrain our faith. If the holy scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us (that which also the uniform course of nature and the peaceable government of the world doth also speak), that there is but one true God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the three Persons of the blessed Trinity the same august names, the same peculiar characters, the same divine attributes (essential to the Deity), the same superlatively admirable operations of creation and providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme honours, services, praises, and acknowledgments to be paid unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and dispute about this high and holy mystery. It was exceeding goodness in God, that he would condescend so far to instruct us, to disclose so noble a truth unto us, to enrich our minds with that τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, that *most excellent knowledge of himself;* and it would be no small ingratitude and unworthiness in us anywise to suspect his word, or pervert his meaning; anywise to subject his venerable oracles to our rude canvasses and cavils. In fine, the proper employment of our mind about these mysteries, is not to search and speculate about them, to discourse flippantly and boldly about them; but with a pious credulity to embrace them, with all humble respect to adore them.

I have thus endeavoured in some measure to defend the outworks of the orthodox doctrine concerning the blessed Trinity: it was beside my intent to insist so long thereon; but the matter did ἐφέλκεσθαι, was so attractive, that I could not waive showing my respect thereto.

I proceed now to that which I principally designed, the proposing briefly some practical considerations, apt to excite us to the exercising our understanding and affections upon those wonderful dispensations of grace and mercy, vouchsafed to us by the holy Trinity, either conjunctly or (as they κατ' οἰκονομίαν are expressed) separately.

We first should carefully study and duly be affected with that gracious consent, and as it were confederacy, of the glorious Three, in designing and prosecuting our good; their unanimous agreement in uttering those three mighty words of favour to mankind, *Faciamus, Redimamus, Salvemus;* Let us make man out of nothing, Let us recover him from sin and perdition, Let us crown him with joy and salvation; we should with grateful resentments observe them conspiring to employ their wisdom in contriving fit means and methods to exert their power in effectual accomplishment of what was requisite to the promoting of our welfare, the rescue of us from all misery, the advancing us to the highest degree of dignity, and instating us in the most perfect condition of happiness, of which our nature is capable; in prosecution of that gracious design, which their joint goodness had projected for us. More distinctly,

1. We should set our mind on God the Father, before the foundation of the world from all eternity, pleasing to forecast with himself the creation of us, and communication of his own image to us; endowing us with most excellent faculties of body and soul; subjecting the visible world to our use and governance; plac-

[y] 1 Pet. ii. 2. [x] Job xl. 4.

ing us in a state of great accommodation and delight: permitting us to fall, that he might raise us to a higher and better condition; resolving to send his own dear Son from his bosom, to procure and purchase the redemption of mankind; preparing and disposing the world for the reception of so great a mercy, by a general testification of his patience and beneficence (*giving showers and fruitful seasons*, and *filling the hearts of men with food and gladness*,[a]) but more especially by prophetical promises, predictions, and prefigurations: also suffering the generality of mankind so *to proceed in its ways*, as might render it sensible of its error and unhappiness, of the need and benefit of a deliverance; then, *in the fulness of time*, when *the creature did earnestly groan, and long for its recovery from vanity and slavery*,[b] actually sending his only Son, and clothing him with human flesh, that conversing with us, he might discover to us his gracious intentions toward us, might confirm the truth thereof by miraculous works, might instruct us by his heavenly doctrine and holy life in our duty, and the terms of our salvation, then freely delivering him over unto death, and accepting his passion as a sacrifice expiating our sins, and meriting his favour toward us; then raising him as *the first fruits* from the dead, setting him at his right hand, investing him with authority to govern and save those who sincerely would believe in him, and faithfully obey him; also sending and bestowing his holy Spirit to dwell in them, to conduct, confirm, and comfort them in the ways of truth and righteousness. These, with manifold other intercurrent passages of gracious providence ascribed to God the Father, we should seriously mind, and so resent, as to be ravished with admiration of his mercy, to be inflamed with love of his goodness, to be possessed with gratitude toward him, to become thoroughly devoted to his service.

2. We should likewise mind the blessed Son of God concurring with his Father in all his purposes of love and mercy toward us, *in making all things*, and *sustaining them by the word of his power;* but especially in his (toward the freeing us from the desperate miseries, corruptions, and slaveries, into which we were plunged) assuming human nature, leading therein a troublesome and toilsome life, for our benefit and instruction; undergoing a bitter and shameful death, for the atonement of our sins, and reconciliation of us to divine favour; purchasing great and precious promises, procuring high and glorious privileges, for us; ascending into heaven to prepare us mansions of bliss; interceding for us with God, and pouring from above manifold blessings upon us; the astonishing miracles of goodness, of wisdom, of condescension and patience, displayed in the management of which undertakings for us, what heart can well conceive, what tongue can utter? What amazement should it produce in us, to consider the brightest efflux of Divine Glory eclipsing and shrouding itself under so dark a cloud of mortal frailty; the Most High stooping into the quality of so mean a creature; the First-born and Heir apparent of heaven descending from his throne of eternal majesty, and voluntarily degrading himself into the *form of a servant*, clad in rags, worn with labour and travel, exposed to contempt and disgrace; to reflect upon the great Creator and sovereign Lord of all the world, who reared the heavens, and founded the earth, who possesseth and upholdeth all things, needing himself a shelter, pinched with want, taking alms from his slaves, and paying tribute to his subjects; to contemplate the Son of God, willingly styling himself the *Son of man*, really subjecting himself to the duties, the necessities, the infirmities of human nature; suffering the coarsest hardships and extremest disasters thereof; all this upon freest choice, with full contentment, and perfect submission to so mean and so distasteful a condition!

We may observe with how admirable goodness he did vouchsafe to converse with a froward generation of men, to instruct a stupid and indocile sort of people, with all sorts of beneficence, to oblige an incredulous, insensible, and ingrateful crew; with how invincible a meekness and patience he *endured the contradiction of sinners*, the scornful reproaches, the wrongful calumnies, the spiteful and

[a] Acts xiv. 17.
[b] Gal. iv. 4; Rom. viii. 22.

cruel usages of the envious and malicious world; being to the highest extremity despised, hated, malignant and abused, by those whom he had most highly honoured, most affectionately loved, and conferred the greatest favours upon. We may with astonishment contemplate that strange contest between divine patience and human wickedness, striving which of them should excel; when we do peruse and weigh those enigmatical passages, God accused by man of blasphemy, the eternal Wisdom aspersed with folly, Truth itself impleaded of imposture, essential Love made guilty of mischief, and supreme Goodness styled a malefactor; infinite Power beat down, and trampled upon by impotent malice; the Judge of all the world, the Fountain of all authority and right, arraigned, condemned, and executed for injustice; the *Desire of all nations* rejected by his own country and kindred; the Joy of paradise (whose lightsome countenance doth cheer heaven itself) almost overwhelmed with grief, uttering lamentable groans, tortured with grievous agonies; the very heart of God bleeding, and the sole Author of life expiring.

We may further study Jesus, with a hearty compassion, and tears gushing from his inmost bowels, pitying not these his own sufferings, but for the vengeance for them due and decreed unto his persecutors: we should mark him excusing their fault, and praying for their pardon; dying willingly for their good, when he died violently by their hand; passionately desiring their salvation, when they maliciously procured his destruction.

We should mind all the actions of the Son of God, our Saviour, with the most wise grounds, endearing circumstances, and precious fruits of them; his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession; as containing instances of the greatest charity and humility possible showed unto us, as arguments of the greatest love and gratitude due from us: mind them we should most seriously, so as to be heartily affected with them, so as to esteem worthily the transcendent honour done us by God assuming our nature, and exalting us to a conjunction with the divine nature; so as to be deeply sensible of our obligation to so immense a charity, that could do and suffer so much for us without any desert of ours, yea, notwithstanding our exceedingly bad deserts, our rebellions and enmities against him; so as to detest the heinousness of our sins, that needed so mighty an expiation, that caused so horrid a tragedy; so as not to neglect so great salvation so frankly offered, so dearly purchased for us; not to frustrate the designs of so unconceivable love and goodness, so as to obey readily so gracious a Master, to follow carefully so admirable an example; so as, in imitation of him, and for his sake, to be meek and humble in heart and in deed, seeing he did so infinitely condescend and abase himself for us; to be patient and submissive to his will, who stooped so low, and suffered so much for us; so as to bear a general affection to mankind, grounded like his, not upon any particuler interest, nor limited by any partial respects, but extended freely, in real desire and intention toward all; liberally to impart the good things we possess, and patiently to brook the crosses we meet with, and heartily to forgive the offences done to us; for that he freely did part with the greatest glories of eternity, with the highest dignities and the richest treasures of heaven, for our sake; when we were *enemies in our minds by wicked works, dead in trespasses and sins*, guilty of numberless grievous offences against him, by his blood redeeming us from wrath, reconciling us to the mercy and favour of God.

3. We should also meditate upon the blessed Spirit of God, with equal goodness conspiring, and co-operating with all the purposes, to all the effects of grace, which conduce to our everlasting happiness; more especially as the repairer of our decayed frames, the enlivener of our dead souls, the infuser of spiritual light into our dark minds, the kindler of spiritual warmth into our cold hearts; the raiser of spiritual appetite to righteousness, and the relish of goodness in our stupid senses: the imparter of spiritual strength and vigour to our feeble powers; the author of all liberty, loosing us from captivity under the tyranny of Satan, from vassalage unto our own carnal lusts and passions; from subjection to a hard and imperious law, from bondage to the terrors of a guilty conscience; as him, that enableth us to perform the

duties, and accomplish the conditions, required of us in order to our salvation, that qualifieth us to be the sons of God by his effectual grace, and assureth us that we are so by his comfortable testimony; as our sure guide in the ways of truth and virtue; our faithful counsellor in all doubts and darknesses; our mighty support and succour in all needs, in all distresses; our ready guard against all assaults and temptations; our sweet comforter in all sadnesses and afflictions: who doth insinuate good thoughts, doth kindle holy desires, doth cherish pious resolutions, doth further honest endeavours in us: who only doth inflame our hearts with devotion toward God; doth encourage, doth enable us to approach unto him; doth prompt us with fit matter of request, and becometh advocate for the good success of our prayers.

We should mind him as the root of all good fruits growing in us, or sprouting from us; the producer of all good habits formed in us, the assister of all good works performed by us, the spring of all true content that we enjoy; to whom our embracing the faith, our continuing in hope, our working in charity, the purification of our hearts, the mortification of our lusts, the sanctification of our lives, the salvation of our souls, are principally due, are most justly ascribed: as the author and preserver of so inestimable benefits unto us, let us mind him; and withal let us consider him as condescending to be a loving friend and constant guest to so mean and unworthy creatures; vouchsafing to attend over us, to converse with us, to dwell in us, rendering our souls holy temples of his divinity, royal thrones of his majesty, bright orbs of his heavenly light, pleasant paradises of his blissful presence; our souls, which naturally are profane receptacles of wicked and impure affections, dark cells of false and fond imaginations, close prisons of black and sad thoughts; as graciously *striving with us*, striving to open and enter into our hearts barred against him by vain conceits and vicious inclinations: striving to reclaim us from the sins and errors, into which we are wont heedlessly or wilfully to precipitate ourselves; striving to make us, what in all duty and wisdom we should be, capable of divine favour, and fit for everlasting happiness: as enduring patiently manifold displeasures and disrespects from us, our rude oppositions against him, our frequent neglects of his kind admonitions, our many perverse humours, wanton freaks, wilful miscarriages, and unworthy dealings toward him.

We should thus mind the blessed Spirit of God, and be suitably affected toward him; so as to be duly sensible and thankful for those unexpressible gifts and blessings indulged to us by him; so as to render all love and reverence, all praise and glory, all obedience and service to him, especially so as to admit him cheerfully into our hearts; yea, invite him thither by our earnest prayers; to make fit preparations for his reception and entertainment (by cleansing our hearts from all loathsome impurities), to make him welcome, and treat him kindly, with all civil respect, with all humble observance; not grieving and vexing him by our distasteful crossness and peevishness; not tempting him by our fond presumption, or base treachery; not extinguishing his heavenly light and holy fire by our foul lusts, our damp stupidities, our cold neglects, our neglects to foment and nourish them by the food of devout meditations and zealous desires: so let us mind him, as to admit gladly his gentle illapses, to delight in his most pleasant society, to hearken to his faithful suggestions, to comply with all his kindly motions, to behave ourselves modestly, consistently, officiously toward him.

Thus should we employ our mind, all the faculties of our soul, our understanding, our will, our affections, upon the blessed Trinity, the Supreme of all things above, the Founder of that celestial society, into which as Christians we are inserted; the Sovereign of that heavenly kingdom, of which we are subjects; the Fountain of all the good and happiness we can hope for in that superior state. To the performance of which duty, there be arguments and inducements innumerable: it is the most proper and connatural object of our mind, that for which it is fittest, and for which it was designed; the best intelligible, and infinitely most amiable of all things. It is the most worthy and noble object, the contemplation of which, and affection whereto, will most elevate, most enrich, most adorn,

most enlarge the capacities, and most satisfy the appetites of our souls; it is the most sweet and pleasant object, wherein all light, all beauty, all perfection do shine; the sight and love of which do constitute Paradise, and beautify heaven itself. It is the most useful and beneficial object of our mind, which will best instruct us in what it concerneth us to know, will most incite us to those duties which we are obliged to perform, will be most efficacious to the begetting in us those dispositions which are indispensably requisite for the attainment and for the enjoyment of that everlasting bliss; unto which that one blessed Unity and glorious Trinity in its infinite mercy bring us all: to whom be all glory, honour, and praise, for ever. *Amen.*

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH EXPLAINED AND VINDICATED

IN SEVERAL

SERMONS

UPON THE CHIEF ARTICLES OF IT

CONTAINED IN

The Apostles' Creed.

TO THE KING.

SIR,

I MOST humbly present to Your Majesty a work, the author whereof, my son, was much the more dear to me for his constant and exemplary loyalty. Not only the general obligation of a subject always engaged him to Your Majesty's service, but the particular favours wherewith you were pleased to honour and encourage his studies, might probably have induced him to a Dedication of this kind, if his modesty would have let him think any thing of his worthy Your Majesty's patronage. This, which I here offer, is, by those who are better able to judge of it than myself, valued as the most considerable of his productions: but it chiefly presumes to entitle itself to your royal protection, because it is an Explication and Vindication of that Christian Faith, whereof Your Majesty is the great Defender.

And, Sir, I beg leave to take this opportunity to make as public an acknowledgment as I can, of that great goodness Your Majesty has shewn in the acceptance and recompense of the fidelity I have through a course of many years borne to the cause of Your Majesty and your Royal Father.

Long may Your Majesty live and reign under the happy conduct and blessing of that Wisdom, in whose right hand is length of days, and in her left hand riches and honour.—I am,

May it please Your Majesty,
Your Majesty's most humble,
faithful, and obedient
Subject and Servant,
THOMAS BARROW.

I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

EXPLAINED AND VINDICATED.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON I.

OF THE EVIL AND UNREASONABLENESS OF INFIDELITY.

HEB. iii. 12.—*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.*

IF the causes of all the sin and all the mischief in the world were carefully sought, we should find the chief of all to be infidelity; either total or gradual. Wherefore, to dehort and dissuade from it, is a very profitable design; and this, with God's assistance, I shall endeavour from these words; in which two particulars naturally do offer themselves to our observation: an assertion implied, that infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart; and a duty recommended, that we be careful to void or correct that distemper: of these, to declare the one, and to press the other, shall be the scope of my Discourse.

That infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart, appeareth by divers express testimonies of scripture, and by many good reasons grounded thereon.

It is by our Saviour in terms called *sin: When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin,—of sin, because they believe not in me:* and, *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin:* and, *If ye were blind, ye should not have had sin; but now ye say, We see, therefore your sin abideth.*[a] What sin? That of infidelity, for which they were culpable, having such powerful means and arguments to believe imparted to them, without due effect.

It hath a condemnation grounded thereon: *He* (saith our Saviour) *that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God:** but condemnation ever doth suppose faultiness.

It hath sore punishment denounced thereto: *God* (saith St. Paul) *shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness;*[b] and our Lord (saith he) at his coming to judgment, will *take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;*[c] whence, among those who *have their part in the lake burning with fire and brimstone, the fearful and unbelievers*[d] (that is, they who fear to profess, or refuse to believe the Christian doctrine) are reckoned in the first place; which implieth infidelity to be a heinous sin.

It is also such, because it is a *transgression of* a principal *law*, or divine command; *This* (saith St. John) *is ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ, the command of him, That we should believe;*[e] *this* (saith our Lord) is *τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ the* signal *work of God* (which God requireth of us), that *ye believe on him whom he hath sent:*[f] that was a duty, which our Lord and his apostles chiefly did teach, enjoin, and press; wherefore correspondently infidelity is a great sin; according to St. John's notion, that *sin* is *ἀνομία, the transgression of a law.*[g]

But the sinfulness of infidelity will appear more fully by considering its nature and ingredients; its causes; its properties and adjuncts; its effects and consequences.

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[a] John xvi. 8, 9; xv. 22; ix. 41; (viii. 25;) ix. 41.

* John iii. 18; xii. 48.—Οὐ γὰρ μόνον τὸ μὴ εἴκειν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀπιστεῖν αὐταῖς χαλεπωτάτην ἐπάγει τὴν κόλασιν.—Chrys. ad Demat. tom. vi. p. 140.

[b] 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. [c] 2 Thess. i. 8.

[d] Rev. xii. 8.

[e] 1 John iii. 23; John vi. 29.

[f] Mark i. 15. [g] 1 John iii. 4.

I. In its nature it doth involve an affected blindness and ignorance of the noblest and most useful truths; a bad use of reason, and most culpable imprudence; disregard of God's providence, or despite thereto; abuse of his grace; bad opinions of him, and bad affections toward him; for

God in exceeding goodness and kindness to mankind hath proposed a doctrine, in itself *faithful and worthy of all acceptation*,[h] containing most excellent truths instructive of our mind and directive of our practice, toward attainment of salvation and eternal felicity; special overtures of mercy and grace most needful to us in our state of sinful guilt, of weakness, of wretchedness; high encouragements and rich promises of reward for obedience: such a doctrine, with all its benefits, infidelity doth reject, *defeating the counsel of God*, crossing his earnest *desires* of our welfare, *despising his goodness and patience*.[i]

To this doctrine God hath yielded manifold clear attestations, declaring it to proceed from himself; ancient presignifications and predictions; audible voices and visible apparitions from heaven, innumerable miraculous works, Providence concurring to the maintenance and propagation of it against most powerful oppositions and disadvantages:[j] but all these testimonies infidelity slighteth, not fearing to give their author the lie; which wicked boldness St. John chargeth on it: *He* (saith the apostle) *that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the testimony that God gave of his Son*.[k]

Many plain arguments, sufficient to convince our minds, and win our belief, God hath furnished: the dictates of natural conscience, the testimony of experience, the records of history, the consent of the best and wisest men, do all conspire to prove the truth, to recommend the usefulness, of this doctrine; but infidelity will not regard, will not weigh, will not yield to reason.

God by his providence doth offer means and motives inducing to belief, by the promulgation of his gospel, and exhortation of his ministers: but all such methods infidelity doth void and frustrate; *thrusting away the word, turning away the ear from the truth, letting the seed fall beside us, casting away the law of the Lord of hosts*; in effect (as those in Job) *saying to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*.[l]

God by his grace *doth shine upon our hearts*, doth attract our wills to compliance with his will, doth excite our affections to relish his truth; but infidelity doth *resist his Spirit*, doth quench the heavenly light, doth smother all the suggestions and motions of divine grace within us.[m]

What God asserteth, infidelity denieth, questioning his veracity; what God commandeth, infidelity doth not approve, contesting his wisdom; what God promiseth, infidelity will not confide in, distrusting his fidelity, or his power: such is its behaviour (so injurious, so rude, so foolish) toward God, and his truth; this briefly is its nature, manifestly involving great pravity, iniquity, and impiety.

II. The causes and sources from whence it springeth (touched in scripture, and obvious to experience) are those which follow:—

1. It commonly doth proceed from negligence, or drowsy inobservance and carelessness; when men being possessed with a *spirit of slumber*,[n] or being amused with secular entertainments, do not mind the concerns of their soul, or regard the means by God's merciful care presented for their conversion; being, in regard to religious matters, of Gallio's humour, *caring for none of those things*:[o] thus, when the king in the gospel sent to invite persons to his wedding feast, it is said, Οἱ δὲ ἀμελήσαντες ἀπήλθον, they *being careless, or not regarding it, went their ways, one to his field, another to his trade*. Of such the apostle to the Hebrews saith, *How shall we escape*, τοιαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας, *who regard not so great salva-*

[h] Tit. ii. 11; iii. 4; 1 Tim. i. 15.
[i] Luke vii. 30; Matt. xxiii. 37; 1 Tim. ii. 4; Luke x. 16; Rom. ii. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 9, 15.
[j] 1 Pet. i. 10; Acts iii. 18; Luke xxiv. 44; Heb. ii. 4; Acts iv. 33; xix. 20; ii. 47; vi. 7; xii. 24.
[k] 1 John v. 10.
[l] 2 Cor. v. 20; Acts xiii. 46; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Matt. xiii.; Isa. v. 24; Job xxi. 14.
[m] John vi. 44; (Rev. iii. 20;) Acts vii. 51; 1 Thess. v. 19; 2 Cor. iv. 4.
[n] Rom. xi. 8.
[o] Acts xviii. 17.
[p] Matt. xxii. 5.

tion, exhibited to us?[q] Of such, Wisdom complaineth: *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. No man:*[r] the greatest part indeed of men are upon this account infidels, for that being wholly taken up in pursuit of worldly affairs and divertisements, in amassing of wealth, in driving on projects of ambition, in enjoying sensual pleasures, in gratifying their fancy and humour with vain curiosities, or sports, they can hardly lend an ear to instruction; so they become unacquainted with the notions of Christian doctrine; the which to them are as *the seed falling by the way side*, which those *fowls of the air*[s] do snatch and devour before it sinketh down into the earth, or doth come under consideration. Hence is unbelief commonly termed not *hearing God's voice*, not hearkening to God's word, the din of worldly business rendering men deaf to divine suggestions.

2. Another source of infidelity is sloth, which indisposeth men to undergo the fatigue of seriously attending to the doctrine propounded, of examining its grounds, of weighing the reasons inducing to believe; whence at first hearing, if the notions hap not to hit their fancy, they do slight it before they fully understand it, or know its grounds; thence at least they must needs fail of a firm and steady belief, the which can alone be founded on a clear apprehension of the matter, and perception of its agreeableness to reason: so when the Athenians did hear St. Paul declaring the grand points of faith, somewhat in his discourse uncouth to their conceit falling from him, some of them did scorn, others did neglect his doctrine; *some mocked: others said, We will hear thee again of this matter;* so Agrippa was *almost persuaded to be a Christian*,[t] but had not the industry to prosecute his inquiry till he arrived to a full satisfaction. A solid faith (with clear understanding and firm persuasion) doth indeed, no less than any science, require sedulous and persevering study; so that as a man can never be learned, who will not be studious; so a sluggard cannot prove a good believer.

3. Infidelity doth arise from stupidity, or dulness of appehensions (I mean not that which is natural; for any man in his senses, how low soever otherwise in parts or improvements, is capable to understand the Christian doctrine, and to perceive reason sufficient to convince him of its truth; but), contracted by voluntary indispositions and defects; a stupidity rising from mists of prejudice, from steams of lust and passion, from rust grown on the mind by want of exercising it in observing and comparing things; whence men cannot apprehend the clearest notions plainly represented to them, nor discern the force of arguments, however evident and cogent; but are like those wizards in Job, who *meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope at noonday, as in the night.*[u]

This is that which is so often charged on the Jews as cause of their infidelity; who *did hear but not understand, and did see but not perceive; because their heart was gross, and their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes were closed;*[v] this is that πώρωσις καρδίας, that *numbness of heart*, which is represented as the common obstruction to the perception and admission of our Lord's doctrine: this our Lord blamed in his own disciples, when he rebuked them thus: *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!*[w] Of this the apostle doth complain, telling the Hebrews, that they were uncapable of improvement in knowledge, because they were νωθροὶ ταῖς ἀκοαῖς, *dull of hearing* for want of skill and use, *not having their senses exericsed to discern both good and evil:*[x] there is indeed, to a sound and robust faith, required a good perspicacity of apprehension, a penetrancy of judgment, a vigour and quickness of mind, grounded in the purity of our faculties, and confirmed by exercise of them in consideration of spiritual things.

4. Another cause of infidelity is a bad judgment; corrupted with prejudicate no-

[q] Heb. ii. 3.
[r] Prov. i. 24; Isa. lxv. 12; lxvi. 4; Jer. vii. 31.
[s] Matt. xiii. 4.
Acts xvii. 32; xxvi, 28.
[u] Job v. 14; Isa. lix. 10; Deut. xxviii. 29.
[v] Acts xxviii. 26; Isa. vi. 9; Matt. xiii. 14; John xii. 40; Rom. xi. 7, 8, 25; Eph. iv. 18; Isa. xxix. 10; Ezek. xxi. 2; 2 Cor. iii. 14; Mark iii. 5; vi. 52; viii. 17.
[w] Luke xxiv. 45. [x] Heb. v. 11, 14.

tions, and partial inclinations to falshood. Men are apt to entertain prejudices favourable to their natural appetites and humours; to their lusts, to their present interests; dictating to them, that wealth, dignity, fame, pleasure, ease, are things most desirable, and necessary ingredients of happiness; so that it is a sad thing in any case to want them: all men have strong inclinations biassing them toward such things; it is a hard thing to shake off such prejudices, and to check such inclinations; it is therefore not easy to entertain a doctrine representing such things indifferent, obliging us sometimes to reject them, always to be moderate in the pursuit and enjoyment of them:[y] wherefore infidelity will naturally spring up in a mind not cleansed from those corruptions of judgment.

5. Another source of infidelity is perverseness of will, which hindereth men from entertaining notions disagreeable to their fond or froward humour: ὦ γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη, *O faithless and perverse generation!*[z] Those epithets are well coupled, for he that is perverse will be faithless; in proportion to the one, the other bad quality will prevail. *The weapons of the apostolical warfare* (against the infidel world) *were* (as St. Paul telleth us) *mighty to the casting down of strongholds.*[a] So it was; and the apostles, by their discourse and demeanour, effectually did force many a strong fortress to surrender: but the will of some men is an impregnable bulwark against all batteries of discourse; they are so invincibly stubborn, as to hold out against the clearest evidence and mightiest force of reason:* if they do not like what you say, if it cross any humour of theirs, be it clear as day, be it firm as an adamant, they will not admit it; you shall not persuade them, though you do persuade them. Such was the temper of the Jews, whom St. Stephen therefore calleth *a stiffnecked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears;*[b] who although they did hear the most winning discourse that ever was uttered, although they saw the most admirable works that ever were performed, yet would they not yield to the doctrine; the mean garb of the persons teaching it, the spirituality of its design, the strict goodness of its precepts, and the like considerations, not sorting with their fancies and desires; they hoping for a Messias arrayed with gay appearances of external grandeur and splendour, whose chief work it should be to settle their nation in a state of worldly prosperity and glory.

6. This is that hardness of heart, which is so often represented as an obstruction of belief; this hindered Pharaoh, notwithstanding all those mighty works performed before him, from *hearkening* to God's word, and regarding the mischiefs threatened to come on him for his disobedience:[c] *I will not* (said he) *let Israel go:* his will was his reason, which no persuasion, no judgment, could subdue. This was the cause of that monstrous infidelity in the Israelites, which baffled all the methods which God used to persuade and convert them: *Notwithstanding* (it is said) *they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God:*[d] whence that exhortation to them: *To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*[e] And to obduration the disbelief of the gospel upon the apostles' preaching is in like manner ascribed: St. Paul, it is said in the Acts, *went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God: but divers were hardened, and believed not:* and, *Exhort one another daily* (saith the apostle) *lest any of you be hardened* (in unbelief) *through the deceitfulness of sin.*[f]

7. Of kin to that perverseness of heart is that squeamish delicacy and niceness of humour, which will not let men entertain or savour any thing, anywise seeming hard or harsh to them, if they cannot presently comprehend all that is said, if they can frame any cavil or little exception against it, if every scruple be not voided, if any thing be required distasteful to their sense; they are offended, and their faith is choked; you must, to satis-

* Οὐ πάντας δυσωπεῖ τὰ σημεῖα, ἀλλὰ μόνους τοὺς εὐγνώμονας.—Const. Apost. viii. 1.

[y] Matt. xvi. 23; John vi. 60, 66.

[z] Matt. xvii. 17. [a] 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

[b] Acts vii. 21, 54; Jer. vi. 10; ix. 26.

[c] Exod. vii. 4, 22; viii. 15, 19; ix. 12.

[d] 2 Kings xvii. 14.

[e] Psal. xcv. 8; Heb. iii. 8.

[f] Acts xix. 8, 9; Heb. iii. 13; *Vide* Mark xvi. 14.

fy them, *speak to them smooth things*,[g] which nowise grate on their conceit or pleasure: so when our Lord discoursed somewhat mysteriously, representing himself in the figure of heavenly bread (typified by the manna of old) given for the world, to sustain men in life, *Many of his disciples, hearing this, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it?* and *from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*[h] this is that which is called being *scandalized at the word*, and *stumbling at it*; concerning which our Saviour saith, *Blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.*[i]

In regard to this weakness, the apostles were fain in their instructions to use prudent dispensation, proposing only to some persons the most easy points of doctrine, they not being able to digest such as were more tough and difficult: *I have* (saith St. Paul) *fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able* to bear it—*for ye are yet carnal;* and, *Ye* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*[k]

Such were even the apostles themselves in their minority; *not savouring the things of God;* being *offended at* our Lord's discourses, when he spake to them of sufferings; and with his condition, when he entered into it.[l]

8. With these dispositions is connected a want of love to truth; the which if a man hath not, he cannot well entertain such notions as the gospel propoundeth, being nowise grateful to carnal sense and appetite: this cause St. Paul doth assign of the pagan doctors falling into so gross errors and vices, *because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge;*[m] and of men's revolting from Christian truth to Antichristian imposture—*because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved, for which cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:*[n] nothing, indeed, but an impartial and ingenuous love of truth (overbalancing all corrupt prejudices and affections) can engage a man heartily to embrace this holy and impure doctrine, can preserve a man in a firm adherence thereto.

9. A grand cause of infidelity is pride, the which doth interpose various bars to the admission of Christian truth; for before a man can believe, πᾶν ὕψωμα, *every height* (every towering imagination and conceit) *that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God must be cast down.*[o]

Pride fills a man with vanity and an affectation of seeming wise in special manner above others, thereby disposing him to maintain paradoxes, and to nauseate common truths received and believed by the generality of mankind.

A proud man is ever averse from renouncing his prejudices, and correcting his errors; doing which implieth a confession of weakness, ignorance, and folly, consequently depresseth him in his own conceit, and seemeth to impair that credit which he had with others from his wisdom; neither of which events he is able to endure.

He that is wise in his own conceit, will hug that conceit, and thence is uncapable to learn: *there is* (saith Solomon) *more hope of a fool than of him;*[p] and he that affecteth the praise of men, will not easily part with it for the sake of truth: whence, *How* (saith our Lord) *can ye believe, who receive glory one of another?*[q] how can ye, retaining such affections, be disposed to avow yourselves to have been ignorants and fools, whenas ye were reputed for learned and wise? how can ye endure te become novices, who did pass for doctors?[r] how can ye allow yourselves so blind and weak, as to have been deceived in your former judgment of things?

He that is conceited of his own wisdom, strength of parts, and improvement in knowledge, cannot submit his mind to notions which he cannot easily comprehend and penetrate; he will scorn to have his understanding baffled or puzzled by sublime mysteries of faith; he will not easily yield any thing too high for his wit to reach, or too knotty for him to unloose: *How can these things be?*[s] what

[g] Isa. xxx. 10.
[h] John vi. 60, 66; 1 Pet. ii. 8; John vi. 61.
[i] Matt. xxiv. 10; xiii. 21.
[j] Matt. xi. 6.
[k] 1 Cor. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12.
[l] Matt. xvi. 23; xxvi. 31.
[m] Rom. i. 28.
[n] 2 Thess. ii. 11.
[o] 2 Cor. x. 5.
[p] Prov. xxvi. 12.
[q] John v. 44; xii. 43.
[r] 1 Cor. iii. 18.
[s] John iii. 9.

reason can there be for this? I cannot see how this can be true; this point is not intelligible: so he treateth the dictates of faith; not considering the feebleness and shallowness of his own reason: Hence, *not many wise men according to the flesh* (or who were conceited of their own wisdom, relying upon their natural faculties and means of knowledge), not many scribes, or *disputers of this world*, did embrace the Christian truth, it appearing absurd and foolish to them; it being needful that a man should *be a fool, that he might*, in this regard, *become wise*.[t]

The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing human conceit, and to the exclusion of all glorying in ourselves; referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty, and grace:[u] it representeth all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent, forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves: such notions proud hearts cannot digest; they cannot like to avow their infirmities, their defects, their wants, their vileness, and unworthiness, their distresses and miseries: they cannot endure to be entirely and absolutely beholden to favour and mercy for their happiness. Such was the case of the Jews; who could not believe, because, *going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit to the righteousness of God*.[v] *Dextra mihi Deus*, every proud man would say with the profane Mezentius.

Christianity doth also much disparage and vilify those things, for which men are apt much to prize and pride themselves; it maketh small account of wealth, of honour, of power, of wit, of secular wisdom, of any human excellency or worldly advantage: it levelleth the rich and the poor, the prince and the peasant, the philosopher and idiot, in spiritual regards; yea, far preferreth the meanest and simplest person endued with true piety, above the mightiest and wealthiest, who is devoid thereof: in the eye of it, *the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*, whatever he be in worldly regard or state. This a proud man cannot support: to be divested of his imaginary privileges, to be thrown down from his perch of eminency, to be set below those whom he so much despiseth, is insupportable to his spirit.

The practice of Christianity doth also expose men to the scorn and censure of profane men; who for their own solace, out of envy, revenge, diabolical spite, are apt to deride and reproach all conscientious and resolute practisers of their duty, as silly, credulous, superstitious, humourous, morose, sullen folks: so that he that will be good, must resolve to bear that usage from them; like David; *I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in my own sight*:[w] but with these sufferings a proud heart cannot comport; it goeth too much against the grain thereof to be contemned.

Christianity doth also indispensably require duties, pointblank opposite to pride: it placeth humility among its chief virtues as a foundation of piety; it enjoineth us to think meanly of ourselves, to disclaim our own worth and desert, to have no complacency or confidence in any thing belonging to us; not to aim at high things;[x] to waive the regard and praise of men; it exacteth from us a sense of our vileness, remorse and contrition for our sins, with humble confession of them, self-condemnation and abhorrence;[y] it chargeth us to bear injuries and affronts patiently, without grievous resentment, without seeking or so much as wishing any revenge; to undergo disgraces, crosses, disasters, willingly and gladly; it obligeth us *to prefer others before ourselves*, sitting down in the lowest room, yielding to the meanest persons: to all which sorts of duty a proud mind hath an irreconcileable antipathy.[z]

A proud man, that is big and swollen with haughty conceit and stomach, cannot stoop down so low, cannot shrink in himself so much, as to *enter into the strait gate, or to walk in the narrow way*,

[t] 1 Cor. i. 26; ii. 6; John vii. 26; 1 Cor. i. 20; ii. 14; iii. 18.
[u] Rom. iii. 27; iv. 2, 16; ix. 11; xi. 6; 1 Cor. i. 29; iii. 21; Ephes. ii. 9; Tit. iii. 5.
[v] Rom. x. 3; ix. 31.
[w] 2 Sam. vi. 22.
[x] Rom. xii. 3, 16.
[y] Job xlii. 3, 6.
[z] Phil. ii. 3; Rom. xii. 10; 1 Pet. v. 5; Luke xiv. 10; Rom. xii. 16.

which leadeth to life: he will be apt to contemn wisdom and instruction.[a]

Shall I, will he say, such a gallant as I, so accomplished in worth, so flourishing in dignity, so plump with wealth, so highly regarded and renowned among men, thus pitifully crouch and sneak? shall I deign to avow such beggarly notions, or bend to such homely duties? shall I disown my perfections, or forego my advantages? shall I profess myself to have been a despicable worm, a villainous caitiff, a sorry wretch? shall I suffer myself to be flouted as a timorous religionist, a scrupulous precisian, a conscientious sneaksby? shall I lie down at the foot of mercy, puling in sorrow, whining in confession, bewailing my guilt, and craving pardon? shall I allow any man better or happier than myself? shall I receive those into consortship, or equality of rank with me, who appear so much my inferiors? shall I be misused and trampled on, without doing myself right, and making them smart who shall presume to wrong or cross me? shall I be content to be nobody in the world? So the proud man will say in his heart, contesting the doctrines and duties of our religion, and so disputing himself into infidelity.

10. Another spring of infidelity is pusillanimity, or want of good resolution and courage: δειλοὶ καὶ ἄπιστοι, *cowards and infidels*,[b] are well joined among those who are devoted to the fiery lake; for timorous men dare not believe such doctrines, which engage them upon undertaking difficult, laborious, dangerous enterprises; upon undergoing hardships, pains, wants, disgraces; upon encountering those mighty and fierce enemies, with whom every faithful man continually doth wage war.

They have not the heart to look the world in the face, when it frowneth at them, menacing persecution and disgrace; but *when affliction ariseth for the word, they are presently scandalized.* It is said in the gospel, that *no man spake freely of our Lord for fear of the Jews:*[c] as it so did smother the profession and muzzle the mouth, so it doth often stifle faith itself, and quell the heart, men fearing to harbour in their very thoughts points dangerous and discountenanced by worldly power.

They have not also courage to adventure a combat with their own flesh, and *those lusts which war against their souls;*[d] to set upon correcting their temper, curbing their appetites, bridling their passions; keeping flesh and blood in order; upon pulling out their right eyes, and cutting off their right hands, and crucifying their members; it daunteth them to attempt duties so harsh and painful.

They have not the resolution to withstand and repel temptations, and in so doing to *wrestle with principalities and powers;* to resist and baffle the *strong one.*[e] To part with their ease, their wealth, their pleasure, their credit, their accommodations of life, is a thing, any thought whereof doth quash all inclination in a faint and fearful heart of complying with the Christian doctrine.

Christianity is a warfare; living after its rules is called *fighting the good fight of faith;* every true Christian is a *good soldier of Jesus Christ;*[f] the state of Christians must be sometimes like that of the apostles, who were *troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears:*[g] great courage, therefore, and undaunted resolution, are required toward the undertaking this religion, and the persisting in it cordially.

11. Infidelity doth also arise from sturdiness, fierceness, wildness, untamed animosity of spirit; so that a man will not endure to have his will crossed, to be under any law, to be curbed from any thing which he is prone to affect.

12. Blind zeal, grounded upon prejudice, disposing men to stiff adherence unto that which they have once been addicted and accustomed to, is in the scripture frequently represented as a cause of infidelity. So the Jews being *filled with zeal, contradicted the things spoken by St. Paul;*[h] flying at his doctrine, with-

[a] Matt. vii. 14; Prov. i. 7, 30; v. 12; xiii. 13; Isa. v. 24; Ezek. xx. 13, 16, 24; Acts xiii. 41. (καταφρονηταί;) Luke x. 16; Rom. ii. 4.

[b] Rev. xxi. 8.

[c] Matt. xiii. 21; (John vii. 13; ix. 22; xix. 38.)

[d] James iv. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 11; Rom. vii. 23.

[e] Eph. vi. 12; (Luke xiv. 31.)

[f] 1 Tim. i. 18; Heb. xii; 1 Tim. vi. 12.

[g] 2 Cor. vii. 5.

[h] Acts xiii. 45; xvii. 5; v. 17; Rom. x. 2; Gal. iv. 17.

out weighing it: so *by instinct of zeal* did St. Paul himself *persecute the church*;[i] being *exceeding zealous for the traditions delivered by his fathers*.[j]

In fine, infidelity doth issue from corruption of mind by any kind of brutish lust, any irregular passion, any bad inclination or habit:* any such evil disposition of soul doth obstruct the admission or entertainment of that doctrine which doth prohibit and check it; doth condemn it, and brand it with infamy; doth denounce punishment and wo to it: whence *men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith;* and *men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth*, are attributes well conjoined by St. Paul, as commonly jumping together in practice; and *to them* (saith he) *that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled*:[k] such pollution is not only consequent to, and connected with, but antecedent to infidelity, blinding the mind so as not to see the truth, and perverting the will so as not to close with it.

Faith and a good conscience are twins, born together, inseparable from each other, living and dying together; for the first, *faith* is (as St. Peter telleth us) nothing else but *the stipulation of a good conscience*,[l] fully persuaded that Christianity is true, and firmly resolving to comply with it: and, *The end* (or drift and purport) *of the evangelical doctrine is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned*: whence those apostolical precepts, *to hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*; and, *to hold faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning the faith have made shipwreck*:[m] a man void of good conscience will not embark in Christianity; and having laid good conscience aside, he soon will make shipwreck of faith, by apostacy from it. Resolute indulgence to any one lust is apt to produce this effect.

If a man be covetous, he can *hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*, or submit to that heavenly law, which forbiddeth us *to treasure up treasures upon earth*; which chargeth us to be liberal *in communication of our goods*; so as to *give unto every one that asketh*; which in some cases requireth to *sell all our goods, and to give them to the poor*; which declareth, that *whosoever doth not bid farewell to all that he hath, cannot be a disciple of Christ*; which ascribeth *happiness to the poor*, and denounceth *wo to the rich, who have their consolation here*.[n] Preach such doctrine to a covetous person, and, as the young gentleman who *had great possessions*, he will *go his way sorrowful*; or will do like the Pharisees, who *were covetous*, and *having heard* our Saviour discourse such things, *derided him*: for *the love of money* (saith St. Paul) *is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith*; ἀπεπλανήθησαν, *they have wandered away*, or apostatized from the faith.[o]

If a man be ambitious, he will not approve that doctrine which prohibiteth us to affect, to seek, to admit glory, or to do any thing for its sake; but purely to seek God's honour, and in all our actions to regard it as our principal aim; which greatly disparageth all worldly glory, as vain, transitory, mischievous; which commandeth us *in honour to prefer others before ourselves*, and to *sit down in the lowest room*; which promiseth the best rewards to humility, and menaceth, that whoever *exalteth himself shall be abased*;[p] the profession and practice whereof are commonly attended with disgrace: such doctrines ambitious minds cannot admit; as it proved among the Jews; who therefore *could not believe, because they received glory from one another*; who therefore would not profess the faith, *because they loved the*

* Οὐ ῥᾴδιον πονηρίᾳ συντρεφόμενον ἀναβλέψαι ταχέως πρὸς τὸ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν δογμάτων ὕψος, ἀλλὰ χρὴ πάντων καθαρεύειν τῶν παθῶν τὸν μέλλοντα θηρᾶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.—Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 8.

[i] Phil. iii. 6, κατὰ ζῆλον διώκων.

[j] Gal. i. 14; Acts xxvi. 11, περισσῶς ἐμμαινόμενος.

[k] 2 Tim. iii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 5; Tit. i. 15.

[l] 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[m] 1 Tim. i. 5; iii. 9; i. 19.

[n] Matt. xix. 23; vi. 19; 1 Tim. vi. 18; Heb. xiii. 16; Luke xvi. 9; vi. 30; Matt. xix. 20; Luke xiv. 33; vi. 20, 24.

[o] Matt. xix. 22; Luke xvi. 14, ἐξεμυκτήριζον αὐτόν.—1 Tim. vi. 10.

[p] Phil. ii. 3; Gal. v. 26; John xii. 43; v. 44; Matt. vi. 1; 1 Pet. i. 24; 1 Cor. vii. 31; 1 John ii. 16; Rom. xii. 10; Luke xiv. 10; Matt. xxiii. 12; Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14.

glory of men rather than the glory of God.[q]

If a man be envious, he will not like that doctrine which enjoineth him to desire the good of his neighbour, as his own; to have complacence in the prosperity and dignity of his brethren; *not to seek his own, but every man another's wealth*, or welfare; to *rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with those that mourn;* which chargeth us *to lay aside all envyings and emulations*,[r] under pain of damnation: he therefore who is possessed with an envious spirit or *evil eye*, will look ill upon this doctrine; as the Jews did, who being *full of envy* and emulation, did reject the gospel; it being a grievous eyesore to them that the poor Gentiles were thereby admitted to favour and mercy.[s]

If a man be revengeful or spiteful, he will be scandalized at that law which commandeth us *to love our enemies*, to *bless those that curse us*, to *do good to them that hate us*, to *pray for them that despitefully use us;* which forbiddeth us to *resist the evil, to render evil for evil, or railing for railing;*[t] which chargeth us to bear patiently, and freely to remit all injuries, under penalty of forfeiting all hopes of mercy from God; which requireth us to *depose all wrath, animosity and malice*, as inconsistent with our salvation: which doctrine, how can a heart swelling with rancorous grudge or boiling with anger embrace? seeing it must be *in meekness that we must receive the engrafted word, that is able to save our souls.*[u]

If a man be intemperate, he will loathe that doctrine, the precepts of which are, that we be *temperate in all thimgs*, that *we bring under our bodies*, that we *endure hardship as good soldiers of Christ;* to *avoid all excess;* to *possess our vessels in sanctification and honour;* to *mortify our members upon earth;* to *crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts;* to *abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul:*[v] with which precepts, how can a luxurious and filthy heart comport?

In fine, whatever corrupt affection a man be possessed with, it will work in him a distaste and repugnance to that doctrine which indispensably, as a condition of salvation, doth prescribe and require universal holiness, purity, innocence, virtue, and goodness; which doth not allow any one sin to be fostered or indulged;[w] which threateneth wrath and vengeance upon all impiety, iniquity, impurity, wherein we do obstinately persist; indifferently, without any reserve or remedy; *wherein the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, that detain the truth in unrighteousness.*[x]

An impure, a dissolute, a passionate soul, cannot affect so holy notions, cannot comply with so strict rules, as the gospel doth recommend; as a sore eye cannot like the bright day; as a sickly palate cannot relish savoury food.* *Every one that doeth evil hateth the light*,[y] because it discovereth to him his own vileness and folly; because it detecteth the sadness and wofulness of his condition; because it kindleth anguish and remorse within him; because it checketh him in the free pursuit of his bad designs, it dampeth the brisk enjoyment of his unlawful pleasures, it robbeth him of satisfaction and glee in any vicious course of practice.

Every man is unwilling to entertain a bad conceit of himself, and to pass on himself a sad doom: he therefore will be apt to reject that doctrine, which being supposed true, he cannot but confess himself to be an arrant fool, he cannot but grant himself a forlorn wretch.

No man liketh to be galled, to be

[q] John v. 44; xii. 43.

[r] 1 Cor. xii. 26, συγχαίρειν—1 Cor. x. 24; Phil. ii. 4; Rom. xii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 1; Gal. v. 20; Rom. xiii. 13; James iii. 14, 16.

[s] Acts v. 17; xiii. 45; xvii. 5.

[t] Matt. v. 44; Rom. xii. 20, 17; 1 Pet. iii. 9; Matt. v. 39; 1 Cor. vi. 7; 1 Thess. v. 15.

[u] Col. iii. 13; Eph. iv. 32; Matt. vi. 15; xviii. 35; Col. iii. 8; 1 Pet. ii. 1; Gal. v. 20; Eph. iv. 31; James i. 21.

* Ἡ ἐμπαθὴς ψυχὴ οὐ δύναται μέλα τι καὶ γενναῖον ἰδεῖν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὑπὸ τινὸς λήμης θολουμένη ἀμβλυωπίαν ὑπομένει τὴν χαλεπωτάτην.—Chrys. in Joh. Orat. 25.

Ἔστι γὰρ, ἔστι καὶ ἀπὸ τρόπων διεφθαρμένων, οὐκ ἀπὸ πολυπραγμοσύνης μόνον ἀκαίρου σκοτωθῆναι τὴν διάνοιαν.—Ibid.

[v] 2 Tim. iv. 5; 1 Cor. ix. 25, 27; 2 Tim. ii. 3; i. 8; iv. 5; Eph. v. 18; 1 Thess. iv. 4; Col. iii. v; Gal. v. 24; 2 Pet. ii. 11.

[w] Eph. ii. 11; iv. 22; Rom. vi. 6; 1 Thess. iv. 3; Eph. v. 6; Col. iii. 6.

[x] Rom. i. 18; ii. 8. [y] John iii. 20.

stung, to be racked with a sense of guilt, to be scared with a dread of punishment, to live under awe and apprehension of imminent danger; gladly, therefore, would he shun that doctrine which demonstrateth him a grievous sinner, which speaketh dismal terror, which thundereth ghastly wo upon him.

He cannot love that truth which is so much his enemy, which so rudely treateth and severely persecuteth him; which telleth him so bad and unwelcome news.*

Who would be content to deem Omnipotency engaged against him? to fancy himself standing on the brink of a fiery lake: to hear a roaring lion ready to devour him? to suppose that certain, which is so dreadful and sad to him?

Hence it is, that *the carnal mind is enmity to God;* hence do bad men *rebel against the light;* hence, *foolish men shall not attain to wisdom, and sinners shall not see her; for she is far from pride, and men that are liars cannot remember her.*[z]

Hence a man resolvedly wicked cannot but be willing to be an infidel, in his own defence, for his own quiet and ease; faith being a companion very incommodious, intolerably troublesome to a bad conscience.†

Being resolved not to forsake his lusts, he must quit those opinions which cross them; seeing it expedient that the gospel should be false, he will be inclinable to think it so: thus he sinketh down, thus he tumbleth himself headlong into the gulf of infidelity.

The custom of sinning doth also by degrees so abate, and at length so destroy, the loathsomeness, the ugliness, the horror thereof, doth so reconcile it to our minds, yea conciliateth such a friendship to it, that we cannot easily believe it so horrid and base a thing as by the gospel it is represented to us.

Vicious practice doth also weaken the judgment and stupify the faculties; so that we cannot clearly apprehend, or judge soundly about spiritual matters.*

The same also quencheth God's Spirit, and driveth away his grace, which is requisite to the production and preservation of faith in us.

14. In fine, from what spirit infidelity doth proceed, we may see by the principles commonly with it espoused, for its support and countenance, by its great masters and patrons; all which do rankly savour of baseness and ill-nature.

They do libel and revile mankind as void of all true goodness; from the worst qualities, of which they are conscious themselves or can observe in others, patching up an odious character of it; thus shrouding themselves under common blame from that which is due to their own wickedness, and dispensing with that charity and honesty which is by God's law required from them toward their neighbour: and having so bad an opinion of all men, they consequently must bear ill-will toward them; it not being possible to love that which we do not esteem.

They allow nothing in man to be immaterial, or immortal; so turning him into a beast, or into a puppet, a whirligig of fate or chance.

They ascribe all actions and events to necessity, or external impulse; so raising the grounds of justice and all virtue, that no man may seem responsible for what he doth, commendable or culpable, amiable or detestable.

They explode all natural difference of good and evil; deriding benignity, mercy, pity, gratitude, ingenuity, that is, all instances of good-nature, as childish and silly dispositions.

All the relics of God's image in man, which raise him above a beast, and distinguish him from a fiend, they scorn and expose to contempt.

They extol power as the most admirable, and disparage goodness as a pitiful thing; so preferring a devil before an angel.

They discard conscience, as a bugbear to fright children and fools; allowing men to compass their designs by violence, fraud, slander, any wrongful ways; so banishing all the securities (beside selfish-

* They hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.—Prov. i. 29; v. 12.

† Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκλέλυσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται, &c.—Chrys. tom. vi. Orat. 12, (p. 140.)

[z] Ὥστε εἰ μέλλομεν ἐρριζωμένην ἔχειν τὴν πίστιν, πολιτείας ἡμῖν δεῖ καθαρᾶς, τῆς τὸ πνεῦμα πειθούσης μένειν, καὶ συνέχειν ἐκείνης τὴν δύναμιν· Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν, οὐκ ἐστὶ βίον ἀκάθαρτον ἔχοντα μὴ περὶ πίστιν σαλεύεσθαι, &c.—Chrys. tom. v. Or. 55.

[a] Rom. viii. 7; Job xxiv. 13; Ecclus. xv. 7.

* ἡ πονηρία φθαρτικὴ τῶν ἀρχῶν.—*Vide* Chrys. in Joh. Or. 5, (p. 582.)

ness and slavish fear) of government, conversation, and commerce; so that nothing should hinder a man (if he can do it with advantage to himself and probable safety) to rebel against his prince, to betray his country, to abuse his friend, to cheat any man with whom he dealeth.

Such are the principles (not only avowed in common discourse, but taught and maintained in the writings) of our infidels; whereby the sources of it do appear to be a deplorable blindness and desperate corruption of mind, an extinction of natural light, and extirpation of good-nature,—Further,

III. The naughtiness of infidelity will appear by considering its effects and consequences; which are plainly a spawn of all vices and villanies, a deluge of all mischiefs and outrages upon the earth: for faith being removed, together with it, all conscience goeth, no virtue can remain; all sobriety of mind, all justice in dealing, all security in conversation, are packed away; nothing resteth to encourage men unto any good, or restrain them from any evil; all hopes of reward from God, all fears of punishment from him, being discarded. No principle, or rule of practice is left, beside brutish sensuality, fond self-love, private interest, in their highest pitch, without any bound or curb; which therefore will dispose men to do nothing but to prey on each other with all cruel violence and base treachery. Every man thence will be a god to himself, a fiend to each other; so that necessarily the world will thence be turned into a chaos and a hell, full of iniquity and impurity, of spite and rage, of misery and torment. It depriveth each man of all hope from Providence, all comfort and support in affliction, of all satisfaction in conscience; of all the good things which faith doth yield.

The consideration of which numberless and unspeakable mischiefs hath engaged statesmen in every commonwealth to support some kind of faith, as needful to the maintenance of public order, of traffic, of peace among men.

It would suffice to persuade an infidel that had a scrap of wit (for his own interest, safety, and pleasure), to cherish faith in others, and wish all men beside himself endued with it.

It in reason obligeth all men to detest atheistical supplanters of faith, as desperate enemies to mankind, enemies to government, destructive of common society; especially considering, that of all religions that ever were, or can be, the Christian doth most conduce to the benefit of public society; enjoining all virtues useful to preserve it in a quiet and flourishing state, teaching loyalty under pain of damnation.

I pass by, that *without faith no man can please God;*[a] that infidelity doth expose men to his wrath and severest vengeance; that it depriveth of all joy and happiness; seeing infidels will not grant such effects to follow their sin, but will reject the supposition of them as precarious and fictitious.

To conclude therefore the point, it is, from what we have said, sufficiently manifest, that infidelity is a very sinful distemper, as being in its nature so bad, being the daughter of so bad causes, the sister of so bad adjuncts, the mother of so bad effects.

But this, you will say, is an improper subject: for is there any such thing as infidelity in Christendom? are we not all Christians, all believers, all baptized into the faith, and professors of it? do we not every day repeat the Creed, or at least say Amen thereto? do we not partake of the holy mysteries sealing this profession? what do you take us for? for pagans? this is a subject to be treated of in Turkey, or *in partibus infidelium.* This may be said: but if we consider better, we shall find ground more than enough for such discourse; and that infidelity hath a larger territory than we suppose: for (to pass over the swarms of atheistical apostates, which so openly abound, denying or questioning our religion) many infidels do lurk under the mask of Christian profession. It is not the name of Christian, or the badges of our religion, that make a Christian; no more than a cowl doth make a monk, or the beard a philosopher: there may be a creed in the mouth, where there is no faith in the heart, and a cross impressed on the forehead of an infidel; *with the heart man believeth to righteousness. Show me thy faith by thy works,* saith St. James:[b] if no works be showed,

[a] Heb. xi. 6.
[b] Rom. x. 8; James ii. 18.

no faith is to be granted; as where no fruit, there no root, or a dead root, which in effect and moral esteem is none at all.

Is he not an infidel, who denieth God? such a renegado is every one that liveth profanely, as St. Paul telleth us.[c] And have we not many such renegadoes? if not, what meaneth that monstrous dissoluteness of life, that horrid profaneness of discourse, that strange neglect of God's service, a desolation of God's law? Where such luxury, such lewdness, such avarice, such uncharitablenes, such universal carnality, doth reign, can faith be there? can a man believe there is a God, and so affront him? can he believe that Christ reigneth in heaven, and so despise his laws? can a man believe a judgment to come, and so little regard his life; a heaven, and so little seek it; a hell, and so little shun it? — Faith, therefore, is not so rife, infidelity is more common than we may take it to be: every sin hath a spice of it; some sins smell rankly of it.

To it are attributed all the rebellions of the Israelites, which are the types of all Christian professors, who seem travellers in this earthly wilderness toward the heavenly Canaan; and to it all the enormities of sin and overflowings of iniquity may be ascribed.

I should proceed to urge the precept, that we *take heed thereof;* but the time will not allow me to do it: I shall only suggest to your meditation the heads of things.

It is infidelity that maketh men covetous, uncharitable, discontent, pusillanimous, impatient.

Because men believe not Providence, therefore they do so greedily scrape and hoard.

They do not believe any reward for charity, therefore they will part with nothing.

They do not hope for succour from God, therefore are they discontent and impatient.

They have nothing to raise their spirits, therefore are they abject.

Infidelity did cause the Devil's apostasy.

Infidelity did banish man from paradise (trusting to the Devil, and distrusting God's word.)

[c] Tit. i. 16.

Infidelity (disregarding the warnings and threats of God) did bring the deluge on the world.

Infidelity did keep the Israelites from entering into Canaan, the type of heaven; as the apostle to the Hebrews doth insist.[d]

Infidelity indeed is the root of all sin; for did men heartily believe the promises to obedience, and the threats to disobedience, they could hardly be so unreasonable as to forfeit the one, or incur the other: did they believe that the omnipotent, all-wise, most just and severe God, did command and require such a practice, they could hardly dare to omit or transgress.

Let it therefore suffice to have declared the evil of infidelity, which alone is sufficient inducement to avoid it.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON II.

OF THE VIRTUE AND REASONABLENESS OF FAITH.

2 Pet. i. 1.——*to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.*

The holy scripture recommendeth faith (that is, a hearty and firm persuasion concerning the principal doctrines of our religion, from divine revelation taught by our Lord and his apostles) as a most *precious* and *honourable* practice; as a virtue of the first magnitude, very commendable in itself, very acceptable to God, very beneficial to us; having most excellent fruits growing from it, most noble privileges annexed to it, most ample rewards assigned for it.[a]

It is in a special manner commanded, and obedience to that command is reckoned a prime instance of piety: *This is his commandment, that we should believe; this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*[b]

It is the root of our spiritual life; for, *He that cometh to God must believe;* and, *Add to your faith virtue*, saith St. Peter,

[d] Heb. iii. 19; iv. 6, &c.
[a] 1 Pet. i. 7; Heb. xi. 6; John xvi. 27.
[b] 1 John iii. 23; John vi. 29.

supposing faith to precede other virtues.[c]

It is the principal conduit of divine grace; for

By it we are regenerated, and become the sons of God; *Ye all* (saith St. Paul) *are the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*[d]

By it we *abide in God*, and do *possess* him, saith St. John.[e]

By it *Christ dwelleth in us*, saith St. Paul.[f]

By it we obtain God's Spirit: *Did ye* (saith St. Paul) *receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*[g]

By it we are justified, or acquitted from guilt, and condemnation for sin: for, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.*[h]

By it our *hearts are purged*, saith St. Paul; *our souls are purified*, saith St. Peter.[i]

By it we are freed from the dominion of sin; according to that of our Saviour: *If ye abide in my word,—ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.*[j]

It procureth freedom of access to God; *We have* (sath St. Paul) *boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*[k]

It is the *shield* whereby we *resist* temptation; and the weapon whereby we *overcome the world.*[l]

In fine, it is that which, being *retained in a good conscience*, and maintained by virtuous practice, doth keep us in a state of salvation, and will assuredly convey us into eternal life and felicity; for *by grace we are saved, through faith.*[m]

That faith should be thus highly dignified, hath always appeared strange to the adversaries of our religion;* and hath suggested to them matter of obloquy against it; they could not apprehend why we should be commanded, or how we can be obliged to believe; as if it were an abitrary thing, depending on our free choice, and not rather did naturally follow the representation of objects to our mind: they would not allow that an act of our understanding, hardly voluntary, as being extorted by force of arguments, should deserve such reputation and such recompenses; for if, argued they, a doctrine be propounded with evident and cogent reason, what virtue is there in believing it, seeing a man in that case cannot avoid believing, is therein merely passive, and by irresistible force subdued? If it be propounded without such reason, what fault can it be to refuse assent, or to suspend his opinion about it? can a wise man then do otherwise? is it not in such a case simplicity, or fond credulity, to yield assent?[n] yea, is it not deceit or hypocrisy to pretend the doing so? may not justly, then, all the blame be charged rather on the incredibility of the doctrine, or the infirmity of reasons enforcing it, than on the incredulity of the person who doth not admit it? whence no philosophers ever did impose such a precept, or did assign to faith a place among the virtues.

To clear this matter, and to vindicate our religion from such misprisions, and that we may be engaged to prize and cherish it; I shall endeavour to declare that Christian faith doth worthily deserve all the commendations and the advantages granted thereto: this I shall do by considering its nature and ingredients, its rise and causes, its efficacy and consequences.

I. As to its nature; it doth involve knowledge, knowledge of most worthy and important truths, knowledge peculiar and not otherwise attainable, knowledge in way of great evidence and assurance.*

1. Truth is the natural food of our soul, toward which it hath a greedy ap-

* Πίστιν——ἣν διαβάλλουσι, κενὴν καὶ βάρβαρον νομίζοντες Ἕλληνες.—Clem. Str. ii. (p. 265.)

Pagani nobis objicere solent, quod religio nostra, quia quasi rationibus deficit, in sola credendi persuasione consistat.—*Ruff. in Symb.*

[c] Heb. xi. 6; 2 Pet. i. 5.

[d] Gal. iii. 26.

[e] John i. 12; 1 John ii. 24; 2 John ix.

[f] Eph. iii. 17.

[g] Gal. iii. 2, 14; Eph. i. 13; Acts ii. 38; v. 32; John vii. 38, 39.

[h] Rom. iii. 25; v. 1; x. 10; Acts xxvi. 18; x. 43.

[i] Acts xv. 9; 1 Pet. i. 22.

[j] John viii. 31.

[k] Eph. iii. 12; Heb. x. 22.

[l] Eph. vi. 16; 1 Pet. v. 9; 1 John v. 5.

[m] 1 Tim. i. 19; iii. 9; i. 5; Eph. ii. 8; Rom. x. 10; viii. 24; i. 16; Heb. x. 34; 1 Pet. i. 9; Luke viii. 12; Acts xv. 30, 31; 2 Thess. ii. 10.

Ἀλογίαν καὶ ἀκαταστασίαν ἔφασκον τῷ ἑκουσίῳ καὶ ἀκουσίῳ.—Arist. Eth. v. 8, iii. 1.

* Πίστις τάξεις τῶν Θεῶν γνώσεως παρασκευαστική.—Chrys. tom. v. Or. 55.

[n] Prov. xiv. 15.

petite, which it tasteth with delicious complacency, which being taken in and digested by it doth render it lusty, plump, and active :* truth is the special ornament of our mind, decking it with a graceful and pleasant lustre ; truth is the proper wealth of reason, whereof having acquired a good stock, it appeareth rich, prosperous, and mighty :° what light is without, that is truth within, shining on our inward world, illustrating, quickening, and comforting all things there, exciting all our faculties to action, and guiding them in it. All knowledge, therefore, which is the possession of truth, is much esteemed ; even that which respecteth objects mean, and little concerning us (such as human sciences are conversant about ; natural appearances, historical events, the properties, proportions and powers of figure, of motion, of corporeal force), doth bear a good price, as perfective of rational nature, enriching, adorning, invigorating our mind ; whence Aristotle doubteth not upon all those habitual endowments, which so accomplish our understanding to bestow the name of virtues ; that with him being the *virtue of each thing, which anywise perfecteth it, and disposeth it for action suitable to its nature.*† And if ignorance, error, doubt, are defects, deformities, infirmities of our soul, then the knowledge which removeth them doth imply the perfection, beauty, and vigour thereof. Faith, therefore, as implying knowledge, is valuable.

2. But it is much more so in regard to the quality of its objects, which are the most worthy that can be, and most useful for us to know ; the knowledge whereof doth indeed advance our soul into a better state, doth ennoble, enrich, and embellish our nature ; doth raise us to a nearer resemblance with God, and participation of his wisdom ; doth infuse purest delight and satisfaction into our hearts ; doth qualify and direct us unto practice most conducible to our welfare ; it is a knowledge, *enlightening the eyes, converting the soul, rejoicing the heart ; sweeter than honey, and the honeycomb ; more precious than rubies ;* which *giveth to* our head an *ornament of grace,* and *a crown of glory.*p For,

Thereby we understand the nature, or the principal attributes of God, of whom only the Christian doctrine doth afford a completely true and worthy character, directive of our esteem, our worship, our obedience, our imitation of him ; whereby our demeanour toward him may become him, and please him.

By it we are fully acquainted with the will and intensions of God, relating both to our duty and our recompense ; what he requireth from us, and what he designeth for us ; upon what terms he will proceed with us in way of grace, of mercy, of justice.

By it we are informed concerning ourselves ; what our frame is, whence our original, to what ends we are designed, wherein our felicity doth consist, and how it is attainable.

It enableth us rightly to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong ; what is worthy of us, and pleasing to God, what misbecoming us, and offensive to him ; both absolutely and comparatively, according to the degrees of each case respectively.

It prescribeth us an exact rule of life, comprising all our duties toward God, our neighbour, ourselves ; to observe which will be most decent, and exceedingly profitable to us.

It teacheth us from what principles, and upon what grounds we should act, that our practice should be truly good and laudable.

It proposeth the most valid inducements to virtue, tendering the favour of God and eternal bliss in reward thereof, menacing divine wrath and endless wo upon its neglect.

It discovereth the special aids dispensed to us for the support of our weakness against all temptations and discouragements incident to us through the course of our life.

The knowledge of these things is plainly the top of all knowledge whereof we are capable ; not consisting in barren notion, not gratifying idle curiosity,

* Ἀλήθεια δὴ πάντων μὲν ἀγαθῶν θεοῖς ἡγεῖται, πάντων δὲ ἀνθρώποις.—Plat. de Leg. v. (p. 481,) de Rep. vi. (p. 675.)

† Πᾶσα ἀρετή, οὗ ἂν ᾖ ἀρετή, αὐτό τε εὖ ἔχον ἀποτελεῖ, καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ εὖ ἀποδίδωσι.—Arist. Eth. ii. 6.

° Psal. cxix. 142, 151.

p Psal. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10 ; (cxix. 103, 111 ;) Prov. iii. 15 ; iv. 9.

not serving trivial purposes, but really bettering our souls, producing most goodly and wholesome fruits, tending to ends most noble and worthy: this indeed is the highest philosophy; the true culture and medicine of our soul; the true guide of life, and mistress of action; the mother of all virtues; the best invention of God, and rarest gift of heaven to men:* for these commendations, by pagan sages ascribed to their philosophy, do in truth solely belong to that knowledge which by faith we do possess: their philosophy could not reach such truths;† it could not so much as aim at some of them; it did but weakly attempt at any: it did indeed pretend to the knowledge of divine and human things (this being its definition, current among them), but it had no competent means of attaining either in any considerable measure;‡ for divine things (the nature of him who *dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto;* the intentions of him, who *worketh all things after the counsels of his will;* the *ways of him, which are more discosted from our ways, than heaven from earth;* the *depths of God, which none but his own Spirit can search out,*[q] or discover) do lie beyond the sphere of natural light, and inquisition of our reason: and as for human things, the chief of them have such a connection with divine things, that who were ignorant of the one, could nowise descry the other; wherefore those candidates of knowledge, notwithstanding their lofty pretences, were fain to rest in a low form, employing their studies on inferior things, *the obscurity of nature, the subtilty of discourse*, and *moral precepts of life*;|| such precepts, as their glimmering light and common experience did suggest; for even in points of common morality and prudence, human wit can but fumble, as by the great clashing and jangling about them is very notorious.

3. Faith also hath this excellent advantage, that it endueth us with such knowledge in a very clear and sure way, comparable to that whereby the theorems of any science are known; it not being grounded on any slippery deduction of reason, nor on slender conjectures of fancy, nor on musty traditions or popular rumours; but upon the infallible testimony of God, conveyed unto us by powerful evidence, striking all capacities, apt with equal influence to enlighten the simple and to convince the wise. For want of this, all human wisdom was so blind and lame; so various, so uncertain; nothing but confusion, unsettlement, and dissatisfaction, arising from mere ratiocination;[r] which, being destitute of light and aid from heaven, doth ever grope in the dark, doth rove after shadows of truth, is bewildered in mazes of intricacy, wherein things lie involved; whence all philosophy did consist in faint guesses, plausible discourses, and endless disputes about matters of highest consequence, such as the original of the world, the administration of human things, the nature and subsistence of our soul, the way to happiness; none being able about such points to conclude with resolution, or to assert with confidence;* so that in effect all the philosophers might be ranged under one great sect of *sceptics*, or *seekers*, the most advised and best disposed among them, in result of their most diligent speculations, appearing very doubtful.

But we have, as St. Peter saith, βεβαιότερον λόγον, *a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to give heed, as*

* Cultura animi, *Cic. Tusc.* 1; Medicina animi, *Tusc.* 3; O vitæ philosophia dux, &c. *Tusc.* 5, *de Leg.* 1, *de Fin.* 3.—Nec ullum arbitror, ut apud Platonem est, majus aut melius a diis datum munus homini.—*Acad.* 1, *Tusc.* 1.

† Omnis optimarum rerum cognitio, atque in iis exercitatio philosophia nominatur.—*De Orat.* 3.

‡ Οὐκ ἐχέγγυοι διδάσκαλοι περὶ Θεοῦ λέγοντες ἄνθρωποι καθὸ ἄνθρωποι, &c.—Clem. Alex. Strom. vi. p. 501.

|| Philosophia in tres partes distributa est in naturæ obscuritatem, in disserendi subtilitatem, in vitam atque mores.—*Cic. de Or.* 1.

[q] 1 Tim. vi. 16; Eph. i. 11; Isa. lv. 9; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

* Ὁ μὴ ἐκ πίστεως βοηθούμενος, ἀλλ' οἴκοθεν ἐπὶ τὸν λόγον ἐρχόμενος, ταῖς ἀνθρωπίναις παρασκευαῖς πρὸς τὴν κατάληψιν τῆς ἀληθείας θαρρῶν, ψεύστης ἐστι, παραπολὺ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐκπίπτων.—Bas. in Isa. xv.——Ὅλως δὲ ἢ ἄνευ πίστεως ἐπὶ τὸ λαλεῖν ἐρχομένη ψυχὴ διακενῆς ληρήσει.—Ibid.

Hanc ego perfectam philosophiam semper judicavi, quæ de maximis quæstionibus copiose posset, ornateque dicere.—*Cic. Tusc.* 5; *Vide in M. Ant. Comm.* p. 143; *Chrys. in Joh. Or.* 63.——Οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτω ποιεῖ σκοτόδινον ὡς ἀνθρώπινος λογισμὸς, ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πάντα φθεγγόμενος καὶ μὴ ἀνεχόμενος ψωτίζεσθαι ἄνωθεν, &c.—Chrys. in Joh. Or. 25.

[r] Acts xvii. 27, 30.

unto a lamp shining in a dark place, guiding us in the obscurities and uncertainties of life; we have *a hope, as an anchor of the soul both sure and stable;*[s]* which stayeth and settleth our mind, being tossed with winds and waves of uncertain cogitations, suggested by different appearances of things.

Hence, as St. Chrysostom is wont to insist, by virtue of faith, rustic and mechanic idiots do in true knowledge surpass the most refined wits, and children prove wiser than old philosophers; an idiot can tell us that which a learned infidel doth not know; a child can assure us that wherein a deep philosopher is not resolved;† for ask a boor, ask a boy educated in our religion, who made him, he will tell you, God Almighty; which is more than Aristotle or Democritus would have told: demand of him why he was made, he will answer you, to serve and glorify his Maker; and hardly would Pythagoras or Plato have replied so wisely: examine him concerning his soul, he will aver that it is immortal, that it shall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it shall abide in a state of bliss or misery everlasting; about which points neither Socrates nor Seneca could assure any thing: inquire of him how things are upheld, how governed and ordered, he presently will reply, by the powerful hand and wise providence of God;‡ whereas among philosphers, one would ascribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune; one to blind influences of stars, another to a confused jumble of atoms: pose him about the main points of morality and duty; and he will in few words better inform you than Cicero, or Epictetus, or Aristotle, or Plutarch, in their large tracts and voluminous discourses about matters of that nature.

So real a property it is of God's law *to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion;* so true it is, that our Lord affirmeth of himself, *I came a light into the world, that he who believeth in me may not abide in darkness;*[t] so justly doth St. Paul affirm concerning divine revelation, that *it is able to make a man wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus;* being *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*[u] This is that high way of holiness, of which the prophet saith, *the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.*[v] Thus is faith in its nature honourable.

II. It hath also divers ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth imply, rendering it commendable and acceptable to God. As,

1. Faith implieth a good use of reason. This is that which commendeth any virtue, that a man acting after it, doth act wisely, in conformity to the frame and design of his nature, or like a rational creature; using his best faculties in the best manner, and in their proper operations, toward the end intended by the all-wise Creator:* this is that, upon which all dispensation of justice is founded; a man being accountable for the use of his reason, so as to deserve reward for the right management, and punishment for the misuse thereof; this is that, consequently, whereon God so often declareth himself to ground his judgment; so that in effect he will justify men for being wise, and condemn them as guilty of folly; whence, in the holy style, wisdom, and virtue, or piety, are terms equivalent; and a fool doth signify the same with a vicious or impious person.[w] And if ever a man deserveth commendation for well using his reason, it is then, when upon mature deliberation he doth embrace the Christian doctrine; for so doing is a most rational act, arguing the person to be sagacious, considerate, and judicious; one who doth carefully inquire into things, doth seriously weigh the case, doth judge soundly about it.

* Τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν ἡμετέραν σεσαλευμένην, καὶ περιφερομένην ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν λογισμῶν ἀσθενείας, &c.—Chrys. Tom. v. Orat. 55.

† Τίς οὐκ ἂν αὐτόθεν μάθοι τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν, ἢ τοὺς ἀγραμμάτους καὶ ἰδιώτας τῶν μέγα ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ καμπαζόντων τοσοῦτῳ σοφωτέρους ἀπέδειξεν, ὅσῳ τῶν μικρῶν παιδίων τοὺς ἔμφρονας ἄνδρας ὑπερέχοντάς ἐστιν ἰδεῖν, &c.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

‡ Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61; (p. 633.)

[s] 2 Pet. i. 19; Heb. vi. 19.

* Πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸν λόγον τὸν ὀρθὸν, τοῦτο ἁμάρτημά ἐστι, &c.—Clem Alex. Pæd. i. 13.

[t] Prov. i. 4; Psal. xix. 7; cxix. 9, 100, 130; John xii. 46; viii. 12.

[u] 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17. [v] Isa. xxxv. 8.

[w] Deut. iv. 6; xxxii. 29; Psal. cxi. 10; Job xxviii, 28; Prov. i. 7, 9, 10.

It was a foul aspersion cast upon our religion by its ancient opposers, that it did require *ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, a mere belief, void of reason;** challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof. This suggestion, if true, were, I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man indeed justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms: but it is really a gross calumny; such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our religion, being repugnant to the nature and tenor thereof; being prejudicial to its interest and design; being contrary to its use and practice.† Never any religion was indeed so little liable to the censure of obtruding itself on men's credulity, none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences; yea provoked them for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage), to a fair, discreet, careful examination thereof. Other religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of ancestors,‡ custom and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments extrinsical, and of small validity in any case), declining all other test and verdict of reason: but our religion confideth in itself, and the pure merit of its cause; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth;[x] referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person.

It indeed ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and choosing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, until, after a competent time and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other; God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man of its truth, who is not affectedly blind and stupid, or wantonly slothful and careless, or frowardly stiff and obstinate.

What indeed better arguments (considering the nature of the objects which faith respecteth, being things spiritual and invisible; considering also the capacities of persons concerned, being all sorts of people, wise and simple, learned and rude) could we have, or could we need, than the conspicuous excellency and usefulness of the doctrine, approving itself to the mind, and confirming itself by palpable experience of most happy fruits, springing from a practice conformable thereto; than its exact correspondence to manifold ancient presignifications and predictions concerning it; than special attestations of God thereto, not only by audible voices, and visible apparitions from heaven, but also by innumerable miraculous works;[y] than the concurrence of Divine Providence in strange methods to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the blessings and consolations, attending a faithful observance of it? what subtilty of discourse, what charm of eloquence, could serve to evince and impress the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands, and promises of God;[z]* concerning the immortal subsistence of our soul, the future judgment, the everlasting rewards

* Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον.—Orig. in Cels. (p. 84.)

Πίστευσον, εἰ σωθῆναι θέλεις ἢ ἄπιθι.—Id. in Cels. vi. (p. 282.)

Ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας οὐχ ἁπλῶς οὐδὲ ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ κρίσει καὶ πληροφορίᾳ χάρισμα εἴληφεν ἐκ Θεοῦ.—Const. Apost. viii. 1.

† Δίχεσθε, φησὶν, ἁπλῶς τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ μηδεὶς ἐξεταζέτω τι πρέπον ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ τι ἀπρεπές· καὶ πίστιν ὀνομάζει τὴν ἀβασάνιστον ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀστάτοις καὶ ἀναποδείκτοις ἐπὶ βλάβῃ συγκατάθεσιν. — Athan. tom. ii. p. 325, de Arianis.

‡ Εὐγνώμων ἐξέτασις.—Orig.

[x] Lact. ii. 6, 7.

* Τί ἀναγκαστικώτερον εἰς συγκατάθεσιν, εἰπέ μοι, προτάσεων κλοκαὶ τὸ συμπέρασμα ἀκόλουθον ἑαυτοῖς ἐφελκόμεναι, ἢ θαῦμα τοσοῦτον ἐνεργῶς δρώμενον, πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπου δύναμιν ὑπερβαῖνον.—Bas. in Psal. cxv.

[y] 1 Pet. i. 10; Heb. ii. 4; Acts. iv. 33; xix. 20.

[z] John vii. 17; Acts v. 32.

hereafter, with such evidence and such force, to the common and vulgar reason, or indeed to any reason of man, as do these plain arguments, needing no reach of wit or depth of judgment to sound their meaning, or feel their strength?

But if any man be too wise to be pleased with such downright and easy ways of conviction, reason itself, well followed, would lead him hither, and serve to produce faith in him; for that there is a God, reason from observation of appearances in nature and providence will collect; that goodness is one of his principal attributes, reason from the same grounds will infer; that God hath an especial regard to men will thence also become notorious; that consequently God will vouchsafe his guidance to men in their way toward happiness, will appear reasonable to conceive; that God hath not done this in any other way, reason, comparing and weighing things, will easily discern; that Christian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reason soon will admit; so hath reason led us to the door of faith, and being arrived thither, will (if our will be not averse) easily find entrance.

Hence God doth not only allow, but enjoin us, to use our best reason in judging of this doctrine, whether it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance; he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to shut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it; but chargeth us to go into the clearest light; to open our eyes wide,[a] to view it thoroughly with our best senses and sharpest attention, before we do yield our consent and approbation to it: his precepts are, that *we examine all things, and hold fast that which is good;* that we *believe not every spirit* (or revelation pretended), but *try the spirits, whether they be of God;*[b] that we stand on our guard, and *take heed that no man deceive us;* that we *be not fools,* nor *children in understanding;* but *wise,* and *perfect men;* that we *compare things different,* and *try what is well-pleasing to God;* that we be *always ready with meekness and modesty to render unto every man demanding it an account of the hope in us.*[c]

He therefore doth expostulate with men for their dullness, their incogitancy, their sluggishness, their folly, as the causes of their unbelief; declaring, that in respect to such defaults, wilfully incurred, he will proceed to condemn it: *He* (saith our Lord) *that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day;* and, *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; If I had not come and spoken unto them——if I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin.*[d] Our Lord, we see, did not urge his bare authority, or exact a faith without ground; but he claimeth it as due upon two most rational accounts; his convincing discourses, and his unparalleled works; which from any well-advised and well-disposed person could not but win belief, that he was *a teacher sent from God.*

Indeed, if we seriously do weigh the case, we shall find, that to require faith without reason is to demand an impossibility;[e] for faith is an effect of persuasion, and persuasion is nothing else but the application of some reason to the mind, apt to draw forth its assent; no man therefore can believe he knoweth not what or why: he that truly believeth, must apprehend the proposition, and he must discern its connection with some principle of truth, which, as more notorious to him, he before doth admit; otherwise he doth only pretend to believe, out of some design, or from affection to some party; his faith is not so much really faith, as hypocrisy, craft, fondness, or faction.

God therefore neither doth nor can enjoin us faith without reason; but therefore doth require it, as matter of duty, from us, because he hath furnished sufficient reason to persuade us; and having made his doctrine credible (*a faithful,* or credible, *word, and worthy of all acceptation;*[f]) having given us reason chiefly to be employed in such matters, as he

[a] John iii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Acts xxvi. 18.
[b] 1 Thess. v. 21; 1 John iv. 1.
[c] Matt. xxiv. 4; Eph. v. 6, 15, 17; 1 Cor. xiv. 20; Eph. v. 10; Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. x. 15; Rom. i. 18; Phil. i. 10; 1 Pet. iii. 15.
[d] Luke xxiv. 45; John xii. 48; x. 37; xv. 22, 24.
[e] John vii. 46; iii. 2.
[f] 1 Tim. i. 15.

justly may claim our assent, so he will take well our ready surrendry of it to him, as an act of reason and wisdom becoming us.

To yield unto reason fairly proposed and proved, is in any case a laudable quality, signifying that a man hath his reason to purpose, that he is guided and governed thereby, not by humour or fancy; qualifying him for conversation and business, for which nothing rendereth a man more unfit than humorous incredulity, or obstinacy against reason. It is especially commendable in these cases, concerning our better part and final state, arguing a man to be sober and advised, affording regard to things best deserving it, employing his consideration in due place, being faithful and just to himself, in attending to his main concernments.

2. Faith implieth a compliance with the providence and grace of God; with his providence framing the economy of things to be believed, discovering it to the world by special revelation, furnishing motives apt to work faith, dispensing opportunities of knowledge leading thereto; with his grace operating in our souls, by illustration of our minds to discern, attraction of our wills to embrace, inclination of our affections to relish and like the heavenly truths exhibited to us.

There is no man to whom means are not administered, sufficient to produce in him that measure of faith which is requisite toward the good management of his life, and his rendering an account for it at God's tribunal; there is no man also, to whom such means are afforded, whom the grace of God, who *desireth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*,[g] doth not in some degree excite to the due improvement of them; but in effect the case is varied, because some men do embrace those means, and comply with that grace, while others do reject or neglect them.

Our Lord saith, that *every one who hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, doth come unto him:* but some there are, to whom the Father speaketh, yet they *stop their ears, and refuse to hear;*[h] some do hear in a sort, but do not learn, ill prejudices or depraved affections barring instruction from their mind; being like those of whom the apostle saith, *The word heard did not profit them, being not mingled with faith in those which heard it.*[i]

No man (saith our Lord again) *can come unto me except the father draw him:* but this attraction is not compulsory; we may hold back; we may withstand it, and not follow.[j]

Faith (saith St. Paul) *is a gift of God*, and *a favour granted to us*; ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *To you* (saith he) *it hath been graciously vouchsafed not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him;* and, *To you* (saith our Lord) *it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven:*[k] but this gift is not always accepted, this favour is not always entertained; God doth not so obtrude it on us, but that we may reject or decline it.

Faith is *a fruit of God's Spirit;* but such as will not grow in a bad soil, not purged from weeds of corrupt prejudice, of vicious affection, of worldly care; which will not thrive without good care and culture.[l]

God inviteth us to believe by the promulgation of his gospel, and exhortation of his ministers; he declareth abundant reason to persuade us; he representeth to our minds the beauty of Christian truth and virtue; he speaketh from without unto us by manifold arguments, able, if we are not very stupid, to convince us; he speaketh within by strong impressions on our consciences, apt, if we are not very stubborn, to subdue us: *Behold* (saith he) *I stand at the door, and knock: if any man will hear my voice, and will open the door, I will come in unto him;*[m] such is the case; God standeth at the door of our heart by the ministry of his word, he knocketh at it by the impulse of his grace; but to hear is the work of our vigilance, to open is an act of our voluntary compliance.

God (saith St. Paul) *who commanded*

[g] 1 Tim. ii. 4.

[h] John vi. 45; Job xxxiii. 16; Zech. vii. 11; Ezek. iii. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Acts vii. 57; Job xxxiii. 14; xxi. 14.

[i] Heb. iii. 7, 15; iv. 2.

[j] John vi. 44; v. 40; Matt. xxii. 3; Luke xiii. 34.

[k] Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 29; (Eph. i. 17, 18;) Matt. xiii. 11.

[l] Gal. v. 22; Matt. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. xii. 3, 9; 1 John ii. 20; iv. 2; 2 Cor. iv. 13; v. 20.

[m] Rev. iii. 20.

the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.[n] God shineth upon us by revelation of his truth, God shineth into us by illumination of his Spirit; the which through the ear doth convey the light of truth unto the heart: but we may by wilful obstruction exclude that light, shutting the windows of our heart against it; we may there quench it by foul affections, we may smother it in fogs of evil prejudice;[o] we may dissipate it by troublesome cares; we may, by affected blindness, or drowsy negligence, render it indiscernible, or ineffectual to us; like those, of whom the apostle there saith, that *the god of this world had blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*[p]

A man may ἀπωθεῖσθαι τὸν λόγον, *thrust away the word*, as it is said of the Jews; he may, as others of the same stamp did, *resist the spirit;* he may, as those worldlings in the gospel, let the seed *fall beside* him, or not *fall deep* into him, or *fall into thorns*, which may *choke it;*[q] he may *hate the light*, and therefore *not come unto it;* or *rebel against it*, as those did in Job; he may, as the Pharisees did, *defeat the counsels*, and *cross the desires of God.*[r]

And as to deal thus with God's word and providence, thus to treat his Spirit and grace, is heinously criminal, so to use them well is very acceptable to God's goodness: if we yield due regard to his providence, and an obsequious ear to his word; if we cheerfully do accept his gifts, and close with his overtures of mercy; if we concur with his motions, and further his gracious designs, he will take it kindly of us; as therein acting becomingly toward him, and gratifying him in that wherein he most delighteth, which is the procurement of our good.

3. Faith doth imply good opinion of God, and good actions toward him.

God our parent hath stamped on our nature some lineaments of himself, whereby we resemble him;* he hath implanted in our soul some roots of piety toward him; into our frame he hath inserted some propensions to acknowledge him, and to affect him; the which are excited and improved by observing the manifest footsteps of divine power, wisdom and goodness, which occur in the works of nature and providence; to preserve and cherish these is very commendable; a man thereby keeping the precious relics of the divine image from utter defacement, retaining somewhat of his primitive worth and integrity; declaring that by ill usage he hath not quite shattered, or spoiled his best faculties and inclinations.

Now that he who believeth hath thus managed himself, so as to have preserved in his soul those seeds of piety, apt to conspire with the influences of grace drawing to belief, doth appear from hence, that faith doth include an assent to divers points, so thwarting our carnal sense and gust, that without a good esteem of God, and good affection toward him, we hardly could admit them; *the carnal mind*, or brutish part within us, being, as St. Paul saith *enmity to God*, and *uncapable of submission to his law;* the *sensual man being not able to receive the things of God, for they are foolishness to him;*[s] to balance which repugnance and indisposition there must be some good notions and good affections in the mind, disposing it to comply with the revelation of truth and operation of grace.

There can hardly be any greater instance of respect and love toward any persons, than a ready yielding of assent to his words, when he doth aver things to our conceit absurd or incredible; than resting on his promise when he seemeth to offer things impossible, or strangely difficult; than embracing his advice, when he recommendeth things very cross to our interests, humour, and pleasure; whence Abraham's faith (expressed in hoping for a son in his decrepit age, and in offering up that son, who was so dear to him, who was *the heir of promise*, the prop of his family and hope) is so magnified as an argument of exceeding respect and affection toward God: *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteous-*

[n] 2 Cor. iv. 6; Eph. i. 17, 18.
[o] 2 Cor. iii. 14.
[p] 2 Cor. iv. 4.
[q] Acts xiii. 46; vii. 51; Matt. xiii. 4, &c.
[r] John iii. 20; i. 5; Job xxiv. 13; Luke. vii. 30; Matt. xxiii. 37.

* Τὸ φυσικὸν φίλτρον πρὸς τὸν κτίσαντα.—Orig.
[s] Rom. viii. 7; 1 Cor. ii. 14.

ness, and he was called the friend of God; it was a great evidence of his friendship, that *against hope he believed in hope, being fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able to perform;* and therefore *it was imputed to him for righteousness;*[t] or accepted by God as a signal act of goodness, whereby he did testify his immoveable opinion concerning the power, fidelity, and benignity of God, together with answerable goodwill toward him.

And many things doth the Christian doctrine propose, apt to try such a friendship; many a *hard saying* doth it assert, which a profane mind can hardly swallow or digest: there is indeed scarce any article of faith, at which we shall not boggle; any matter of duty, which we shall not start at; any promise of God, whereat we shall not stagger; if we be not seasoned with favourable apprehensions and inclinations toward him who recommendeth them to us, as endued with those attributes which secure their credibility.

That God Almighty should erect this stately fabric of heaven and earth, decked with so rich and goodly furniture, with especial regard to man, so puny and mean a creature, whom he foresaw so ready to offend and wrong him; that upon his foul misdemeanour God should not withdraw his gracious protection and care from him, but thence should take occasion of designing and capacitating him for a state far more happy than that whence he had lapsed, making his punishment a benefit, and his deserved death a gate of immortality; that for the redemption of him, continuing in apostasy and rebellious enmity, God should please to send down out of his bosom, from the height of glory and blessedness, his own dearest Son, to partake the baseness and infirmity of our flesh, to endure the inconveniences and troubles incident to our condition, to undergo a most painful and ignominious death for the expiation of our offences: these are mysteries to which we should not easily give credence, did we not conceive God immensely good and gracious.

That God could not pitch on more compendious and commodious ways of expressing his goodness and mercy, we hardly should admit, if we did not take him to be transcendently wise, far beyond our reach and comprehension.*

That Jesus, a man in appearance like to ourselves; of mean parentage, of poor estate; who lived as a beggar and a vagrant, who died as a malefactor and a slave, in semblance forlorn to God and man, should be the Lord of life and glory, the general Author of salvation, the Judge of all men, the King of all the world, is a point which cannot but appear very strange, and very scandalous, to minds not imbued with special reverence of the divine power and wisdom.

That God, who is so perfectly holy, so exactly just, so extremely displeased with iniquity, should yet bear so patiently, and so easily pardon, enormous transgressions, against himself; that he should accept so mean services, and to so slight performances should dispense so precious rewards, who would believe, that is not possessed with conceptions of his admirable clemency and bounty?

That God one day will raise the dead, re-collecting our scattered dust and rearing our dissolved frame, we should not easily grant, had we not a strong opinion of God's power, and that *nothing is too hard for him* to accomplish.

That to deny ourselves in all ways, to *hate our own souls*, to take up a cross, to forsake kindred and friends, to quit houses and lands, *to renounce all that we have*, to reject the profits, the honours, the delights of the world, to cut off our right hands, to pluck out our right eyes, to mortify our members, and crucify our flesh, to be dead to the world, to expose our lives unto greatest dangers, yea to sacrifice them unto certain loss, are often things very good, most advisable and eligible, how could we be ever induced to conceive, if we did not take God to be most wise, who hath prescribed such duties; most faithful, who hath engaged to satisfy us for the discharge of them; most able fully to requite us for the pains and damages which we sustain in such practice?

That the methods of Providence should be so intricate and unaccountable; that the passage to happiness should be so rough, and that to misery so smooth; that

[t] James ii. 23; Rom. iv. 18, 21, 22; Heb. xi. 19, 11.

* Eph. iii. 8.—ἀνεξιχνίαστος πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

He who disposeth all things, should to those whom he most liketh and loveth dispense temptations, crosses, disgraces, all kinds of hardship and sorrow; permitting those whom he disapproveth and detesteth to live without interruption in quiet, splendour, and jollity; would stumble one, who hath not entertained a general assurance concerning the wisdom and equity of God.

Faith, therefore, in most of its chief parts, doth imply him that owneth it to be well conceited and well affected toward his Maker; thereby avowing his most glorious perfections, the which do assure the truth of his word and doctrine: *He* (saith our Lord) *that hath received my testimony, hath set his seal that God is true;*[u] that is, most evidently he doth signify his opinion of God's veracity and fidelity, together with the divine perfections requisite to make them good; for be (saith the believer in his mind) the proposition never so uncouth to my apprehensions, yet God is true who affirmeth it; be the duty never so harsh to my sense, yet God is wise and good who appointeth it; be the promise never so unlikely in appearance to find effect, yet God is faithful and able to perform it: and he that is thus disposed in judgment and affection toward God, no wonder if his demeanour be very acceptable to him.

Thus is faith precious, considering its nature, and those essential ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth include or imply. It will also appear to be so, if we consider its rise, and those good dispositions which concur in its production.

III.—1. To the engendering of faith, there is required a mind sober, composed, and wakeful;[v] ready to observe what befalleth, apt to embrace what is offered, conducible to our good and advantage; a mind not so drowned in worldly care, sensual enjoyment, or impertinent sport, as to oversee or neglect the concerns of our better part, and eternal state.

That we may believe, we must have *eyes to see*, and *ears to hear*, and *a heart to understand;* we must attentively look with our eyes, we must *incline our ears to God's word*, we must *apply our heart to instruction.*[w]

Thus in the apostolical history we may observe, that when the apostles, in a manner apt to stir up any man, being awake, to remark, did propose their doctrine, some readily did yield their ears and hearts to their discourse; while others did not mind or regard it.

2. Faith doth require much diligence and industry. We must have the patience to give God the hearing, carefully attending to what is propounded; as it is said of Lydia, that she did προσέχειν, *attend to the words spoken by St. Paul;* and, δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, *we must* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *yield extraordinary attention to the things heard;*[x] we must, as our Saviour warneth, let the evangelical *word sink down into our ears;*[y] we must take the pains to consider the notions, and to weigh the reasons enforcing them; as the Bereans did, who did ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφὰς, *examine the scriptures, whether those things were so*, as St. Paul did teach out of them. We must ἐνδείκνυσθαι τὴν σπουδὴν, *exert* and *demonstrate that studious care*[z] which is requisite to get a clear knowledge and firm persuasion concerning the points of belief; for *he that received the seed into the good ground*, was ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων καὶ συνιὼν, *he that heard the word, and did understand it*,[a] or well consider it: God for this reason doth lay his truth not so open, or obvious, that we may be somewhat exercised, and put to use a pious diligence in finding it; it lieth under the surface, that we may delve for it; *searching the scriptures*,[b] weighing reasons, comparing things.

3. Faith must needs proceed from sincerity, and soundness of judgment.

The assent, which upon contemplation and considering of things we do yield to them, is usually termed judgment; and it much resembleth that act whose name

[u] John iii. 33.

[v] 1 Thess. v. 6.

[w] Deut. xxix. 4; Matt. xiii. 9; xi. 15; Rev. ii. 7; Psal. lxxviii. 1; Job xiii. 17; Isa. xxxii. 3; xxxv. 5; Prov. xxiii. 12; ii. 10; iv. 1, 20; vii. 24.

[x] 1 Tim. iv. 13; Acts xvi. 14; Heb. ii. 1.

[y] Luke ix 44.

[z] Acts xvii. 11; Heb. vi. 11, 12; iv. 11, σπουδάσωμεν εἰσελθεῖν.

[a] Matt. xiii. 23.

[b] John v. 39.

it borroweth: for as he is a good judge, who after a full cognizance and careful discussion of the case with its pleas, doth pronounce freely and fairly, being no way swayed either by his own inclination, or by temptation from without; who is not biassed by any previous affection or dislike, not drawn by favour, not daunted by fear, not bribed by profit, not charmed by flattery, not dazzled by specious appearance, not gulled by crafty insinuations or by fine speech, not tired by solicitation or importunity, not seduced by precedents or custom; not perverted by any such means, which are indirect, impertinent, or intrinsical to the cause, so as to give a wrong sentence; so is he that assenteth to Christian truth: many considerations will exempt him from any suspicion of being any wise so corrupted.

For the gospel cometh under trial in a guise nowise plausible or advantageous to human conceit;[c] its garb and circumstance are nowise taking, or attractive of any favour to it; but such rather, as are apt to raise dislike and scandal against it; it being, as St. Paul saith, presented up *in earthen vessels*, in a way very homely and contemptible.[d] It representeth a mean, a poor, a persecuted, a crucified man, offering salvation, and claiming obedience;[e] attended by persons of like condition and fortune, urging the same overtures and pretences upon us: and what impression is such an appearance likely to work upon our fancy, which is prone to affect splendid and pompous shows?

The same doth not present to us any bribe of gain, doth not tempt us with any hope of preferment, doth not allure us with any bait of pleasure; but challengeth a free sentence; and that such an one which may greatly prejudice our worldly interests, may spoil our profit, may stop our preferment, may dash all our pleasure: *In the world ye shall have tribulation: We must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God: Every one that will live godlily in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*[f] Such are the promises and enticements it useth.

Neither doth it soothe or court us by glozing speech, so as to recommend itself to our fancies by raising in us a good conceit of ourselves; but dealeth bluntly and coarsely with us; faithfully and plainly acquainting us with our own case, involved in its cause; how grievous sinners we be, how obnoxious to justice we stand; how worthless we are, how wretched we shall be, secluding that mercy and grace of God, which it tendereth upon its own terms, of confessing our guilt, disclaiming our merit, humbly seeking mercy, forsaking our own ways, and submitting to God's will.

It doth not solicit us in trim language, nor by sly insinuations doth inveigle us to embrace it; but in downright terms, in a plain dress of speech, in a resolute strain doth charge us, upon our peril, to do it right, denouncing upon our refusal extremities of wrath and vengeance.

It advanceth pleas against the bent of our temper, which ever is prone to things forbidden, and averse from things enjoined by it: against the prejudices of our mind, which is always apt to approve or to admire things which it condemneth or vilifieth; to dislike or despise things which it commendeth and magnifieth: against the affections of our heart, the dearest objects of whose love, delight, and care, it would discard and drive from us; the most unwelcome and disgustful things whereto, it would introduce and bring to us: against our strongest appetites, and most earnest passions; the violent motions of which it doth curb and check, doth quell, or doth allay: against many temptations, potently drawing us to things from which it reclaimeth, stoutly driving us from things which it recommendeth: against the stream of habitual usage, and the torrent of common example, things so prevalent upon us: in fine, against ourselves, such as we naturally are, such as we by education and custom are made; whom it impeacheth of heinous guilt and enormous folly; whose conceit and credit it debaseth; whom it depresseth into

[c] John vii. 24, μὴ κρίνετε κατ' ὄψιν.
[d] 2 Cor. iv. 7; Gal. iv. 13.
[e] 1 Cor. ii. 3.
[f] John xvi. 33; xvii. 14; Acts xiv. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 21; 2 Tim. iii. 12; 1 Thess. iii. 3; Phil. i. 29; Eph. iii. 13; Matt. xvi. 24; x. 38.

the confines of hell and misery: all within us, all about us, do with might and main oppose it; our lust, our fancy, our honour, our interest, our reputation, our principles, our customs, our friends, our enemies; the flesh, the world, the Devil, all combinedly are so many fierce adversaries, so many shrewd advocates, so many clamorous solicitors against its cause.

He therefore, who notwithstanding all these disadvantages determineth in favour of it, must assuredly be a very upright, impartial, and incorrupt judge; declaring his sense purely according to the dictates of his reason and conscience.

What indeed greater integrity can a man express, than in thus deciding a cause referred to him so much against himself, as he is naturally affected, and standeth related to things here? What greater equity can he show, than in avowing so harsh, so rough, so unpleasing truths, so little gratifying his own sense or fancy, so little favouring his profit or pleasure? What greater ingenuity can there be, than to espouse that doctrine which pincheth our liberty within so narrow bounds; which layeth such restraints upon our thoughts, our words, our actions; which interdicteth to us so many enjoyments, which exacteth from us so great pains?

4. To the begetting faith there must concur humility, or a readiness to entertain sober and moderate opinions of ourselves, together with suitable affections and desires; for he that with hearty persuasion and serious resolution embraceth Christianity, doth thereby stoop to many things very cross to the vain conceit, the proud humour, and haughty stomach of man.

The first step into the Christian state is a sight and sense of our own imperfection, weakness, baseness, and misery: we must discern and feel, that our mind is very blind, and our reason very feeble; that our will is very impotent, lame, depraved, prone to evil, and averse from good;[g] that our life is void of merit, and polluted with guilt; that our condition is deplorably sad and wretched; that of ourselves we are insufficient to think or do any good, in order to our recovery or deliverance; whence we are obliged to sore compunction of spirit for our deeds and our case, to humble confession of our sins and miseries, to earnest supplication for mercy and grace, to heal and rescue us from our sad estate: *Lord have mercy on me, a sinner: What shall I do to be saved? Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?*[h] such are the ejaculations of a soul teeming with faith.

He that entereth into the faith, must therewith entirely submit his understanding, and resign his judgment to God, as his master and guide; being ready to believe whatever God declareth, however to his seeming unintelligible or incredible; to follow whither God conducteth, although like Abraham *he knoweth not whither he goeth*;* to approve that which God ordaineth, however distasteful to his sense; to undertake that which God requireth, however difficult; to bear that which God imposeth, how burdensome soever; being content that Divine wisdom shall absolutely sway and reign over his wisdom; that his reason shall be puzzled, shall be baffled in many cases; that his mind shall be rifled of all its prejudices, its fond curiosities, its presumptuous confidences, of *every thought and device*[i] advancing itself against divine truth.

He must abandon all good opinion of himself, all conceitedness of his own worth, merit, excellency, felicity in any kind; slighting his wealth, his power, his dignity, his wit, his wisdom, and the like advantages natural or secular, which are so much prized in vulgar and worldly esteem; as things in themselves of no consideration, nor otherwise valuable than as talents intrusted by God, or instruments of his service; disowning them from himself, as things freely dispensed by God, and absolutely depending on his disposal: saying with St. Paul, *Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and, do count them but dung, that I may win*

[g] 2 Cor. iii. 5.

* Heb. xi. 8.—Οὐκ ἐπιστάμενός που ἔρχεται.

[h] Luke xviii. 13; Acts xvi. 30; Rom. vii. 24; Naz. Or. xxvi. p. 454.

[i] 2 Cor. x. 5.

Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.[k]

He also that cordially doth embrace the Christian doctrine, with resolution of conforming his practice thereto, must look for it to sustain much disgrace; to be hated, to be censured and taxed, to be slighted and scorned, to be reproached, to be spurned as a fool, an idiot, a humourist, a silly, superstitious, fantastical, morose body, by the world, and the adherents to its corrupt principles, its vicious fashions, its depraved sentiments, and practices;[l] *who will wonder* (with indignation and scorn) *at those who did not run into the same excess of riot, speaking evil* and railing *at them*;[m] especially in times when wickedness *doth lift up its horn*, when profaneness doth not only much prevail, but doth insult and vapour over piety.

Every Christian, as such, immediately doth admit notions quite debasing high conceit, which ascribe all our good things purely to divine bounty, which allow us to own nothing but evils springing from our defects, infirmities, and corruptions, from our guilty naughtiness and folly; which display our great imperfection, indigency, impotency, ignorance, error, unworthiness, and forlorn wretchedness; which assure that we do subsist in total dependencies upon God, continually needing his protection, succour, and mercy.

He must undertake the practice of duties extremely cross to proud humour; to comport with injuries and affronts, without revenge, without resentment of them; to place himself beneath others; to be content with his state, how mean and poor soever; to bear patiently all events incident to him, however sad and grievous; with the like, contrary to the gust of a proud heart.

He that doth thus demean himself, embracing such notions, and complying with such duties, how can he otherwise than be a very humble, sober, and modest person?

5. To faith, much fortitude, much resolution and courage, must conspire: for he that firmly persuadeth himself to be a Christian, doth embark in a most difficult and dreadful warfare, doth undertake most high and hazardous enterprises, doth engage in the boldest adventures that a man can set upon; he intendeth to encounter most puissant, stout and fierce enemies; to fight many a bloody battle; to attack many a strong hold, to sustain many a sharp brunt, to endure many sore hardships, to run into many terrible dangers, to break through many tough difficulties, to surmount many great discouragements, impediments, and oppositions.

He doth set himself in array against the world, the flesh, and the devil, that strong confederacy banded against him with their utmost force of strength and subtilty.[n]

He must combat the world, by its fair looks, flatteries, and caresses, enticing to sin; by its frowns, menaces, and rough treatments, deterring from duty; ensnaring us by its profits, its glories, its pleasures; seducing us by its bad customs and examples; distracting us with its cares, and amusements of business.[o]

He must cope with the flesh, that intestine and treacherous foe; which with its corrupt prejudices and imaginations, with its stubborn proclivities, with its impetuous appetites, with it boisterous passions, doth *war against our soul, striving to bring our minds into captivity under the law of sin, which is in our members.*[p]

He must *grapple with* the devil, that *strong one*, that *greedy lion*, that *wily snake*, that rueful *dragon*, always waiting to surprise us, always gaping to devour us, always laying close trains to entrap us,[q] always throwing *fiery* darts of temptation, to consume or scorch us: *Our wrestling* (as the apostle doth express it) *is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*[r]

In these conflicts he must expect to meet with many a grievous repulse, to bear many a hard knock, to feel many a sore wound; to be often beat back, often

[k] Phil. iii. 8, 9.
[l] John xv. 18, 19.
[m] 1 Pet. iv. 4, βλασφημοῦντες.
[n] 1 John v. 4.
[o] Eph. ii. 2; iv. 22; Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. vii. 31; 2 Pet. i. 4.
[p] 1 Pet. ii. 11; Rom. vii. 23.
[q] Eph. vi. 12; 1 Pet. v. 8, 9; Eph. vi. 11; iv. 12; 2 Cor. ii. 11.
[r] Eph. vi. 12.

knocked down, often thrust through, often trampled on, and insulted over.

To set on these things is surely the highest gallantry that can be; he that hath the heart to attempt and undergo such things, is a daring and brave man indeed; he that successfully can achieve such exploits is truly a hero; most deserving notable trophies, and everlasting monuments of renown.

The undertakings of Alexander, of Hannibal, of Cæsar, did not signify valour like to this; their achievements were but toys in comparison to these: those famous gallants would have found it infinitely harder to conquer the world in this way: to have subdued their lusts, and mastered their passions, would have proved far more difficult, than to get advantage in scuffles with armed men; to discomfit legions of devils, would have been to them another kind of work, than was the vanquishing squadrons of Persians, of Gauls, of Romans: to have set upon their own ambition and vanity, their intemperance, their revenge; to have quelled those inward enemies; to have sustained affronts, disgraces, afflictions, with a calm and contented mind, would have more tried their courage, than all which they attempted; making a great show, but signifying little of true fortitude.

6. The noble virtue of patience is likewise accessary to faith; thereto all kinds of patience must concur; patience of labour in God's service, and obedience to all his commands; *patience of hope*,[s] in waiting for the accomplishment of God's pleasure; patience of persecution for God's sake, and in conscience of our duty to him; patience of crosses and afflictions by God's disposal allotted to us for our instruction, our exercise, our probation, our correction, and improvement in goodness. For,

Christianity is the great school and special academy of patience,[t] wherein we are informed, are inured, are trained up and tried to bear all things: the cross is the badge of our profession, without willingly carrying which, we cannot be the children of God or disciples of Christ; whereby we are *conformed to the image of our Lord, the man of sorrow and acquainted with grief:* tribulation is our lot, *to which we are appointed*, and to which *we are called:* persecution is the condition proposed to us; it being told us that *every one who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution;* affliction is the way toward happiness; *for by many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of heaven;*[u] it is represented as a favour granted to us to suffer; for ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *to you* (saith St. Paul) *it hath been indulged, not only to believe in Christ, but to suffer for him;* it is *our glory*, our joy, our beatitude. Our work is *to run with patience the race that is set before us:* in fine, faith and patience are the pair, which being coupled together, draw us to the *inheritance of the promises;* patience being *needful* to introduce and support faith.[v]

7. With faith also must concur the virtue of prudence, in all its parts and instances: therein is exerted a sagacity, discerning things as they really are in themselves, not as they appear through the masks and disguises of fallacious semblance, whereby they would delude us; not suffering us to be abused by the gaudy shows, the false glosses, the tempting allurements of things; therein we must use discretion in prizing things rightly, according to their true nature and intrinsic worth; in choosing things really good, and rejecting things truly evil, however each kind may seem to our erroneous sense; therein we must have a good prospect, extending itself to the final consequences of things, so that looking over present contingencies we descry what certainly will befall us through the course of eternal ages.

In faith is exercised that prudence, which guideth and prompteth us to walk by the best rules, to act in the best manner, to apply the best means toward attainment of the best ends.

The prudence of faith is indeed the only prudence considerable; all other prudence regarding objects very low and ignoble, tending to designs very mean or

[s] 1 Thess. i. 3.

[t] Heb. v. 8.

[u] Heb. xii. 6; Matt. xvi. 24; Rom. viii. 29; Isa. liii. 3; 1 Thess. iii. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 21; 1 Tim. iii. 12; Acts xiv. 22.

[v] Phil. i. 29; Eph. iii. 13; Matt. v. 11; James i. 2; Rom. v. 3; James i. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 14; iii. 14; Heb. xii. 1; vi. 12; Rev. xiii. 10; Heb. x. 36; Luke xxi. 19.

base, having fruits very poor or vain. To be wise about affairs of this life (these fleeting, these empty, these deceitful shadows) is a sorry wisdom; to be wise in *purveying for the flesh*,[w] is the wisdom of a beast, which is wise enough to prog for its sustenance; to be wise in gratifying fancy, is the wisdom of a child, who can easily entertain and please himself with trifles; to be wise in contriving mischief, or embroiling things, is the wisdom of a fiend, in which the old serpent, or grand politician of hell, doth exceed all the Machiavels in the world: this, as St. James saith, is *earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom;* but the wisdom of faith, or that *wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works.*[x]

8. In fine, the embracing Christian doctrine doth suppose a mind imbued with all kind of virtuous disposition in some good degree; for seeing that doctrine doth highly commend, and strictly prescribe all virtue, he must needs be a friend to all virtue, and a devoted servant thereto, who can heartily approve and like it;[y] his eye must be sound, and clear from mists of bad prejudice, who can ken the beauty, and bear the lustre of it: his palate must be pure from vicious tinctures, who can relish its sweetness; his heart must be void of corrupt affections and desires, who sincerely doth affect it, and firmly doth cleave thereto; his conscience must be good, who can hope for the excellent rewards which it proposeth, who can stand proof against the terrible menaces it denounceth; his intentions must be upright, who dareth offer them to be scanned by so exact rules; his life must in good measure be blameless, who can present it before the bar of so rigorous judgment; he must be a man of much goodness, ingenuity, and integrity, who can think it expedient, who can be content and willing that such a doctrine be accounted true, which so plainly discountenanceth, which so peremptorily condemneth, which so severely punisheth all kinds of wickedness; for *He* (as our Saviour saith, and he alone) *who doeth the truth, doth come to the light, that his deeds, may be manifested. Faith*, therefore, *and good conscience*, are well by St. Paul so often coupled, as inseparable associates.[z]

Where now are they, who wonder that faith is so commended, doth find such acceptance with God, and is so crowned with reward; who would banish it from the company of virtues, and out of all moral consideration; who would have it taken for an involuntary act, forced on the mind, and issuing from dry speculation? for, seeing so many excellent dispositions of soul are its ingredients, essentially connected with it; seeing so many noble acts of will do concur to its production; seeing it hath so many choice virtues inseparably adherent, as previous or concomitant to it; it is no wonder that they should moralize it, should render it very considerable, so capable of praise, so worthy of recompense.

If we therefore do believe, because we will apply our minds to regard our best concerns, because we will yield due attention to the declarations and overtures of God, because we will take the pains to weigh the reasons persuasive of truth, because we look on things with an indifferent eye, and judge uprightly about them, because we have the courage, the patience, the prudence, the innocence, requisite for avowing such truths; then surely faith is voluntary, and therefore very commendable.

Whoever indeed will consider the nature of man, or will consult obvious experience, shall find, that in all practical matters, our will, or appetite, hath a mighty influence upon our judgment of things; causing men with great attention to regard that which they affect, and carefully to mark all reasons making for it; but averting from that which they dislike, and making them to overlook the arguments which persuade it; whence men generally do suit their opinions to their inclinations; warping to that side where their interest doth lie, or to which their complexion, their humor, their passions, their pleasure, their ease, doth sway them; so that almost any notion will seem true, which is profitable, which is safe, which is pleasant, or any wise grate-

[w] Rom. xiii. 14. [x] James iii. 15, 17.
[y] Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 3.

[z] John iii. 21; 1 Tim. i. 5, 19; iii. 9.

ful to them; that notion false, which in any such respect doth cross them: very few can abstract their minds from such consideration, or embrace pure truth, divested of them; and those few who do so, must therein most employ their will, by strong efforts of voluntary resolution and patience disengaging their minds from those clogs and biasses.* This is particularly notorious in men's adherence to parties divided in opinion, which is so regulated by that sort of causes, that if you do mark what any man's temper is, and where his interest lieth, you may easily prognosticate on what side he will be, and with what degree of seriousness, of vigour, of zeal he will cleave thereto: a timorous man you may be almost sure will be on the safer side; a covetous man will bend to that party where gain is to be had; an ambitious man will close with the opinion passing in court; a careless man will comply with the fashion; affection arising from education or prejudice will hold others stiff; few do follow the results of impartial contemplation.

All faith, therefore, even in common things, may be deemed voluntary, no less than intellectual; and Christian faith is especially such, as requiring thereto more application of soul, managed by choice, than any other; whence the ancients, in their description of it, do usually include this condition, supposing it not to be a bare assent of the understanding, but a free consent of the will: *Faith* (saith Clemens Alexandrinus) *is a spontaneous acceptance, and compliance with divine religion;* and, *To be made at first was not in our power; but God persuadeth us to follow those things which he liketh, choosing by the rational faculties which he hath given us, and so leadeth us to faith*, saith Justin the Martyr.†

The same is supposed in holy scripture; where of believers it is said, that they did ἀσμένως, *gladly*, or willingly, *receive the word*, and they received it μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, *with all* willingness, or *readiness of mind*.[a]

And to defect of will, infidelity is often ascribed: *Ye will not come unto me* (saith our Saviour) *that ye might have life;* and, *How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!* and, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come:*[b] and, *Of this* (saith St. Peter of some profane infidels) *they are willingly ignorant, that by the word of God the heavens were of old:* and of the like St. Paul saith, *That they received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*[c]

Indeed to prevent this exception, that faith is a forced act, and therefore not moral; or to render it more voluntary and worthy, God hath not done all that he might have done to convince men, or to wring belief from them: he hath not stamped on his truth that glaring evidence which might dazzle our minds;* he doth not propose it armed with irresistible cogency; he hath not made the objects of faith conspicuous to sense, nor the propositions thereof demonstrable by reason, like theorems of geometry: this indeed would be to depose faith, to divest it of its excellency, and bereave it of its praise: this were to deprive us of that *blessedness* which is adjudged to those who *believe and do not see;*[d] this would prostitute wisdom to be defloured by the foolish, and expose truth to be rifled by the profane; this would take from our reason its noblest exercise, and fairest occasion of improvement; this would confound persons fit to be distinguished, the sagacious and the stupid, the diligent and the slothful, the ingenuous and the froward, the sober and the vain, the pious and the profane; *the children of wisdom*, which are apt to *justify it*, and the sons of folly, who *hate knowledge;* the friends

* ——facile quæ credita prosunt credimus.

† Πίστις πρόληψις ἑκούσιός ἐστι, θεοσεβείας συγκατάθεσις, &c.—Clem. Strom. ii. p. 265.——Ἐθελοντὴν συνέπεσθαι τῷ συμφέροντι συνέσεως ἀρχή.—Ibid.

Τὸ μὲν ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι οὐχ ἡμέτερον ἦν. τὸ δὲ ἐξακολουθῆσαι οἷς φίλον αὐτῷ αἱρουμένους δι' ὧν αὐτὸς ἐδωρήσατο λογικῶν δυνάμεων, πείθει τε καὶ εἰς πίστιν ἄγει ἡμᾶς.—Just. Mart. Apol. ii. (p. 58.)

* Ἄπιστος, ὦ φίλον ψεῦδος ἀκούσιον.—Clem. Alex. Strom. (p. 268.) et Plat. (p. 841.)

[a] Acts ii. 41; xvii. 11.

[b] John v. 40; Luke xiii. 34; Matt. xxii. 3.

[c] 2 Pet. iii. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 10, 12.

[d] John xx. 29.

of truth and virtue, and the lovers of falsehood and unrighteousness.[e]

God therefore hath exhibited his truth, shining through some mists of difficulty and doubt, that only those who have clear eyes, who do look attentively, who are willing to see, may discern it; that those who have eyes may see, and *those who have ears may hear.*[f] He meaneth this way of discovering his mind for a test to prove our ingenuity, for a field to exercise our industry, for an occasion to express his goodness in crowning the wisdom and virtue of good believers; that *the trial of your faith* (saith St. Peter) *being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*[g] He meaneth also thence to display his justice in punishing the slothful, the vain, the perverse, the profane; that, as the apostle saith, *all men might be judged, who believed not the truth—but had pleasure in unrighteousness:*[h] hence, *There must of necessity be scandals,*[i] said our Saviour: hence our Lord was *set for a mark to be contradicted, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed;*[j] and, *There must be heresies*, saith St. Paul; why? that *they which are approved* (οἱ δόκιμοι, persons that can bear the test) *may be manifested.*[k]

God dealeth with us as he did with his ancient people.[l] He, to assure them of his gracious protection and providence over them, or to persuade them of the truth of what he by Moses taught them, did before their eyes perform stupendous works in their behalf, affording them miraculous deliverances from their enemies, and prodigious supplies of their needs; the sight of which did extort a temporary belief: *Then* (it is said) *they believed his words, and sang his praise;* and, When *Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.*[m] Yet withal God suffered divers things to fall out, *to humble them* (as it is said) *and to prove them, and to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments, or no:*[n] the result of which dispensations was, that they being inconsiderate, impatient, and refractory, *believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation; they despised that pleasant land, and gave no credence to his word;*[o] so God dealt with that typical people; and in like manner doth he proceed with us; he hath ministered signal attestations to the gospel; he hath dispensed arguments abundantly sufficient to convince well-disposed minds of its truth; but he hath not cleared it from all scruples, which may disturb the froward or the delicate; he hath not exempted it from all scandals, which may disgust the perverse and stubborn; he hath not prevented all exceptions or cavils devisable by curious or captious wits against it; he hath not guarded it wholly from the malicious opposition of those whose interest it might seem, in favour of their vices and follies, to impugn it: just it was, that to such the gospel should be *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; who stumble at the word, being disobedient, unto which they were appointed;*[p] (that is, God having so purposely ordered the evangelical dispensation, that such persons should not approve it, or comply with it;) just it was, that they should be debarred from a knowledge of that truth, which they should abuse, and *detain in unrighteousness;*[q] just it was, that they should be punished with such temptations unto doubt and error, *who would not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*[r]

Indeed, more abundant light of conviction, as it would deprive good men of much praise and reward, so it might be hurtful to many persons; who having affections indisposed to comply with truth, would outface and outbrave it, however

[e] Matt. xi. 19; Prov. i. 29; v. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12.
[f] Matt. xi. 15; xiii. 9, 11; ὑμῖν δέδοται, Chrys. in Joh. Or. 5.
[g] 1 Pet. i. 7, 8; James i. 3.
[h] 2 Thess. ii. 12.
[i] Matt. xviii. 7.
[j] Luke xvii. 1; ii. 35.
[k] 1 Cor. xi. 19; (1 John ii. 19.)
[l] Psal. lxxviii. cv. cvi.
[m] Psal. cvi. 12; Exod. xiv. 31.
[n] Deut. iv. 32; viii. 2; vii. 19.
[o] Psal. lxxviii. 22, 32, 56, &c.; cvi. 24; Neh. ix. 16; Deut. i. 32.
[p] 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.
[q] Rom. i. 18, 28.
[r] 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12.

clear and evident; *they would* (as Job speaketh) *rebel against the light*,[s] although shining on them with a meridian splendour; they would plunge themselves into an inexcusable and incorrigible state of impiety, *doing despite to the Spirit of grace*, and involving themselves in the *unpardonable sin;* as we have many instances in the evangelical history of those who, beholding unquestionable evidences of divine power attesting to our Lord's doctrine, which they could not but acknowledge, did yet oppose it, did blaspheme against it, did outrageously persecute it.[t]

Should God, as he once did in a dreadful manner, thunder out his laws, and *shake the earth with his voice*,[u] yet many would little regard them; should God, in confirmation of his will, perform every day as many miracles as he did once in Egypt, yet there would be Pharaohs, *hardening their hearts* against it; should God himself descend from heaven, as once he did, and converse with us, instructing us by discourse and practice, displaying among us conspicuous evidences of his power and goodness, *yet who would believe his report, to whom would the arm of the Lord be revealed?*[v] how few cordially would embrace his doctrine, or submit to his law! As it was then, so it would be now; he would be hated, be scorned, be affronted, and abused, by persons qualified with like affections as those were, who so then did serve him; for in all times like persons will do like things: as then only *his sheep* (that is, well-disposed persons, like sheep, simple, harmless, and ductile) *did hear his voice, and follow him;*[w] so others *would not believe him, because they were not of his sheep*,[x] being imbued with swinish, currish, wolvish dispositions, incapacitating them to follow his conduct: there would be persons like to those, of whom it is said, *Behold, ye scorners, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*[y]

[s] Job. xxiv. 14.
[t] Heb. x. 29; Matt. xii. 31, 45; ix. 34; xii. 24; Luke xiii. 17; John xi. 47; xii. 37; ix. 28; Acts iv. 16.
[u] Heb. xii. 18, 26.
[v] John xii. 28; Rom. x. 16.
[w] John x. 27.
[x] John x. 26.
[y] Acts xiii. 41.

(It is with instituted religion as it is with natural; the works of nature are so many continued miracles of divine power and wisdom; in the common track of Providence many wonderful things do occur; yet who by them is moved to acknowledge and adore God? notwithstanding them, how many athiests and Epicureans are there! So will it be in regard to divine revelations, which however clearly attested, will yet be questioned.)

Those indeed whom sufficient reasons (such as God hath dispensed to us) will not convince, upon them the greatest motives would have small efficacy;* so father Abraham told the rich man: *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.*[z]

They may pretend, if they had more light they would be persuaded; like those who said, *Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe;*[a] but it would not in effect prove so, for they would be devising shifts, and forging exceptions; or, however, they would oppose an impudent face and an obstinate will against the truth.

Wherefore, it was for the common good, and to Divine wisdom it appeared sufficient, that upon the balance truth should much outweigh falsehood, if the scales were held in an even hand, and no prejudices were thrown in against it; that it should be conspicuous enough to eyes, which do not avert themselves from it, *or wink* on purpose, or be clouded with lust and passion;[b] it was enough that infidelity is justly chargeable on men's wilful pravity; and that *πρόφασιν οὐκ ἔχουσι, they have not* (as our Saviour saith) *any reasonable excuse* for it.[c]

But so much for the causes and adjuncts of faith; the effects and consequences of it I reserve for another occasion.

* Γνώμης χρεία εὐγνώμονος· κἂν μὴ αὕτη παρῇ, σημείων οὐδὲν ὄφελος.—Chrys. in Matt. Or. 43.

[z] Luke xvi. 31; (John v. 47.)
[a] Matt. xxvii. 42.
[b] Acts xxviii. 27.
[c] John xv. 22.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON III.

OF THE VIRTUE AND REASONABLENESS OF FAITH.

2 Pet. i. 1.——*to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.*

Of all Christian virtues, as there is none more approved and dignified by God, so there is none less considered or valued by men, than faith: the adversaries of our religion have always had a special pique at it, wondering that it should be commanded, as if it were an arbitrary thing, or in our choice to believe what we please; why it should be commended, as if it were praise-worthy to be subdued by reason; either by that which is too strong for us to resist, or by that which is too weak to conquer us.

But that faith worthily deserveth the praises and privileges assigned thereto, we may be satisfied, if we do well consider its nature and ingredients, its causes and rise, its effects and consequences.

In its nature it doth involve knowledge, or the possession of truth, which is the natural food, the proper wealth, the special ornament of our soul; knowledge of truths most worthy of us, and important to us, as conversing about the highest objects, and conducing to the noblest use; knowledge peculiar, and not otherwise attainable, as lying without the sphere of our sense, and beyond the reach of our reason; knowledge conveyed to us with great evidence and assurance; the greatest indeed that well can be, considering the nature of its objects, and the general capacities of men, and the most proper way of working upon reasonable natures.

It implieth (that which giveth to every virtue its form and worth) a good use of our reason, in carefully weighing and uprightly judging about things of greatest concernment to us; it implieth a closing with God's providence dispensing opportunities, and representing motives serving to beget it; a compliance with God's grace attracting and inclining our souls to embrace his heavenly truth: it implieth also good opinions of God, and good affections toward him, which are requisite to the believing (upon his testimony, promise, or command) points very sublime, very difficult, very cross to our fancy and humour.

The causes, also, which concur in its production, are very excellent; many virtuous dispositions of soul are requisite to the conception and birth of it: there must be a sober, composed, and wakeful mind, inquisitive after truth, apt to observe it starting, and ready to lay hold on it: there must be diligence and industry in attending to the proposals, and considering the enforcement of it: there must be sincerity and soundness of judgment, in avowing its cause, against the exceptions raised against it by prejudice and carnal conceit, by sensual appetites and passions, by temptation and worldly interest: there must be great humility, disposing us to a submission of our understanding, and a resignation of our will unto God, in admitting notions which debase haughty conceit, in espousing duties which repress sturdy humour: there must be much resolution and courage, in undertaking things very difficult, hazardous, and painful; much patience, in adhering to a profession which exacteth so much pain, and exposeth to so much trouble: there must be great prudence, in applying our choice (among so many competitions and pretences claiming it) to that which is only good; in seeing through fallacious disguises, and looking over present appearances, so as to descry the just worth, and the final consequence of things: there must, in fine, be a love of truth, and a liking of all virtue, which is so highly commended, and so strictly prescribed, by the Christian doctrine.

These particulars, commending faith to us, I have already largely prosecuted; I shall only therefore now insist upon the last head, concerning its effects, whereby (as the goodness of a tree is known by its fruits) the great excellency thereof will appear.

Its effects are of two sorts; one springing naturally from it, the other following it in way of recompense from Divine bounty; I shall only touch the first sort; because in this its virtue is most seen, as in the other its felicity.

Faith is naturally efficacious in producing many rare fruits; naturally, I say, not meaning to exclude supernatural grace, but supposing faith to be a fit in-

strument thereof; for *God worketh in us to will, and to do*, but in a way suitable to our nature, employing such means as properly serve to incline and excite us unto good practice; and such is faith, supported and wielded by his grace: for indeed,

Even in common life, faith is the compass by which men steer their practice, and the main spring of action, setting all the wheels of our activity on going;[a] every man acteth with serious intention, and with vigour answerable to his persuasion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours. What moveth the husbandman to employ so much care, toil, and expense in manuring his ground, in ploughing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it, but a persuasion that he shall reap a crop, which in benefit will answer all? what stirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vast and dangerous seas, adventuring his stock, abandoning his ease, exposing his life to the waves, to rocks and shelves, to storms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates, to sweltry heats and piercing colds, but a persuasion, that wealth is a very desirable thing, and that hereby he may acquire it? What induceth a man to conform unto strictest rules of diet and abstinence, readily to swallow down the most unsavoury potions, patiently to endure cuttings and burnings, but a faith that he thereby shall recover or preserve health, that highly valuable good? From the same principle are all the carking, all the plodding, all the drudging, all the daring, all the scuffling in the world easily derivable. In like manner is faith the square and the source of our spiritual activity, disposing us seriously to undertake; earnestly, resolutely, industriously and constantly, to pursue the designs of virtue and piety, brooking the pains and hardships, breaking through the difficulties and hazards, which occur in religious practice; engaging us to the performance of duty, deterring us from the commission of sin.

What but faith, eyeing *the prize*, will quicken us *to run patiently the race that is set before us*? what but faith, apprehending *the crown*, will animate us to *fight stoutly the good fight*?[b] what but faith, assuring the wages, will support us in working all the day with unwearied industry and patience? what can raise pious hope, what can kindle holy desire, what can spur on conscientious endeavour, but a faith of attaining worthy recompenses for doing well? what can impress an effectual dislike and dread of offending, but a faith of incurring grievous punishment and sad mischiefs thence?

In reason, a strong and steady belief but of one point or two, would suffice to engage us upon all duty, and to restrain us from all sin. Did we only believe the future judgment, with the results of it, that alone would be an effectual both spur and curb to us: for who, believing that his soul then shall be laid bare, that his inmost thoughts and secretest purposes shall be disclosed unto the view of all the world, will presume to harbour in his breast any foul thought or base design? who, believing that he shall then be obliged to render an account of *every idle word*, will dare to utter villainous blasphemies, wicked curses, fond oaths, profane jests, vile slanders or detractions, harsh censures, or bitter reproaches? who, being persuaded that a rigorous amends will then be exacted from him for any wrong he doeth, will not be afraid with violence to oppress, or with fraud to circumvent his neighbour? who, deeming himself accountable then for every talent and opportunity, will find in his heart to squander away or misemploy his time, his power, his wealth, his credit, his wit, his knowledge, his advantages in any kind of doing God service? who, knowing himself obnoxious to a sudden trial, whereat his estate, his reputation, his life, all his interest and welfare, must lie at stake, will contentedly lose his mind in wanton sports or wild frolics? In fine, if we are really persuaded, that presently after this short and transitory life, we shall openly, in the face of God, angels, and men, be arrained at an impartial bar, where all our thoughts, our words, our actions, shall most exactly be sifted and scanned; according to which cognizance a just doom shall be pronounced, and certainly executed upon us; how must this needs engage us to be very sober and serious, very circumspect and vigilant over our mind, our tongue, our dealings, our conversation, our whole life!

[a] (Acts xi. 24.)

[b] Heb. xii. 1; Phil. iii. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25; 2 Tim. iv. 7; 1 Tim. i. 8; vi. 7.

Again, If a man firmly believeth, that by a pious course of life he shall gain the present favour and friendship of the Almighty, with all the real goods whereof he is capable; and that hereafter he shall be rewarded for it with an eternal life in perfect rest, in glory, in joy, in beatitude unspeakable; that he shall obtain *an incorruptible inheritance, a treasure that can never fail, a crown that will not fade, a kingdom that cannot be shaken;*[c] wherein he shall enjoy the blissful vision of God, smiling in love upon him; the presence of his gracious Redeemer, embracing him with dear affection; the most delightful society of blessed angels, and *just spirits made perfect;*[d] a state of felicity, surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest pleasures here, can yield but a faint resemblance; how can he forbear earnestly to embrace and pursue such a course of practice! what zeal must such a persuasion inspire; what vigour must it rouse within him! who upon any terms would forfeit the hopes of such a happiness? who would not be glad to undertake any pains, or endure any hardships for it?

And who likewise heartily is persuaded, that by vicious conversation he shall incur the wrath of Almighty God, and stand obnoxious to the strokes of his severe justice; that persisting therein he infallibly must drop into the bottomless pit, into that utter darkness, that furnace of fire unquenchable, that lake of flaming brimstone; where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the immortal worm shall gnaw on his heart, and he must feel the pangs of a never-dying death; that state of most bitter remorse, of most horrid despair, of most forlorn disconsolateness, of continual and endless torment; wherein he shall be banished from the face of God, and by immutable destiny barred from all light, all ease, all solace;[e] from any glimpse of hope, from any respite of pain; the wretchedness of which condition not the sharpest pain of body, not the sorest anguish of mind, not the saddest distress here, can anywise reach or represent: whoever, I say, is possessed with a belief of these things consequent on a wicked life, will he not thence be effectually scared from it? what bait of temptation shall allure him, what force shall drive him thereto? will he for a flash of pleasure, for a puff of fame, for a lump of pelf; will he, in compliment or complaisance to others, in apish imitation or compliance with a fashion, out of mere wantonness, or in regard to some petty interest; will he, in hope of any worldly good, or fear of any inconvenience here, suffer himself to be cast into that dismal state? will he not sooner go and shake a lion by the paw, sooner provoke an adder to bite him, sooner throw himself down a precipice, or leap into a caldron of burning pitch? Certainly, in reason to believe such things, and to sin, can hardly be consistent.

Such a general influence is faith, looking with a provident eye upon future rewards and consequences of things, apt to have upon our practice: the which collaterally taking in the glorious attributes of God, the gracious performance of our Saviour, the beauty and sweetness of each divine precept, the manifold obligations and encouragements to duty, the whole latitude and harmony of evangelical truth, all tending to the recommendation of holiness, what efficacy must it needs have! how powerfully must it incite us to good practices!

We are told, that faith doth *purify our souls*, and *cleanse our hearts*,[f] that is, our whole interior man, all the faculties of our soul; disposing them to an universal obedience and conformity to God's holy will: and so it is; for faith not only doth clear our understanding from its defects (blindness, ignorance, error, doubt), but it cleanseth our will from its vicious inclinations (from stubborn, froward, wanton, giddy humours;) it freeth our affections from disorder and distemper, in tendency toward bad objects, and in pursuit of indifferent things with immode-

[c] 1 Pet. i. 4; Luke xii. 33; 1 Pet. v. 4; Heb. xii. 28. [d] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

[e] Matt. xviii. 30; Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Luke iv. 31; Rev. xx. 3; Matt. viii. 12; xiii. 42, 50; Mark ix. 43, 45; (Isa. xxxiii. 14;) Rev. xx. 21; Matt. ix. 44; Rev. xx. 10; Dan. xii. 2, Everlasting shame; 2 Thess. i. 9; Rom. ii. 9.

[f] ἁγνίζει ψυχάς, 1 Pet. i. 22; καθαρίζει καρδίας, Acts xv. 9.

rate violence; it purgeth our conscience, or reflexive powers, from anxious fear, suspicion, anguish, dejection, despair, and all such passions which corrode and fret the soul: how it affecteth this we might declare; but we cannot better set forth its efficacy and puissance, than by considering the special and immediate influence it plainly hath in the production of each virtue, or on the performance of every duty: *Add to your faith virtue*, saith St. Peter; implying the natural order of things, and that if true faith precede, virtue will easily follow.[g]

The chief of all virtues, *piety* (comprising the love of God, fear and reverence of him, confidence in him, gratitude for his favours and mercies, devotion toward him, a disposition to worship and serve him), seemeth according to reason inevitably consequent from it; for can we believe God superexcellent in all perfection, and immensely benign toward us; can we be persuaded that in free goodness he did create us, and doth continually preserve us in being; that his bounty hath conferred on us all our endowments of soul, and all our accommodations of life; that he hath a tender desire of our welfare, from which even our most heinous offences and provocations cannot divert him; that he most wonderfully hath provided for our happiness; in order thereto, when we had rebelled and revolted from him, sending down out of his bosom, from the top of celestial glory and bliss, his only dear Son, into this base and frail state, to sustain the infirmities of our nature, the inconveniences of a poor life, the pains of a bitter and shameful death, for our recovery from sin and misery; that with infinite patience he driveth on this gracious design, continually watching over us, attracting us to good, and reclaiming us from evil by his grace, notwithstanding our frequent and stiff reluctancies thereto; can, I say, we heartily believe these points, and not love him? can the eye of faith behold so lovely beauty, so ravishing sweetness in him, and the heart not be affected? Can we apprehend so many miracles of nature, of providence, of grace performed by him for our sake, and not be thankful to him? Can we likewise believe God infinitely powerful, infinitely just, infinitely pure, and withal not dread him, not adore him? Can we believe him most able, most willing, most ready to do us good, and not confide in him? or can we take him to be most veracious, most faithful, most constant, and not rely on his promises? Can we avow him to be our Maker, our Patron, our Lord, our Judge, and not deem ourselves much obliged, much concerned to serve him? Can we believe, that God in our need is accessible, that he calleth and inviteth us to him, that he is ever willing and ever ready to hear us, that he is by promise engaged to grant us whatever we do with humble fervency and constancy request; yet forbear to pray, or easily desist from it? Do we believe his omnipresence and omniscience; that he is with us wherever we go, doth know all we think, hear all we say, see all we do; and will not belief engage us to think honestly, to speak reverently, to act innocently and decently before him? Do we believe, that God's commands do proceed from that will, to which rectitude is essential; from that wisdom, which infallibly discerneth what is just and fit; from that goodness, which will require from us nothing but what is best for us; from that unquestionable and uncontrollable authority, to which all things are subject, and must submit; will not this sufficiently engage us to obedience? Surely the real belief (such as we have about common things, apprehended by our reason or by our sense) of any such divine act, or attribute, cannot fail to strike pious affection and pious awe into us.

After piety, the next great virtue is *charity*; the which also is easily derived *from a pure heart* (as St. Paul speaketh) *and faith unfeigned*;[h] it representing peculiar obligations and inducements thereto, from the most peremptory commands of God, from the signal recompenses annexed to that duty, from the strict relations between Christians, from the stupendous patterns of charity set before us. Who can withhold love from him, whom he believeth his brother, in a way far nobler than that of nature, so constituted by God himself, the common Father, by spiritual regeneration, and adoption of

[g] 2 Pet. i. 5; 1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 22.

[h] 2 Tim. i. 15.

grace; whom he believeth born of the same heavenly seed, renewed after the same divine image, quickened by the same Holy Spirit, united to him not only in blood, but in soul; resembling him, not in temper of body or lineaments of face, but in conformity of judgment and practice; partner of the one inheritance, and destinated to lead a life with him through all eternity, in peaceful consortship of joy and bliss? Who can deny him love, whom he believeth out of the same miserable case by the same price redeemed into the same state of mercy? for whom he by faith vieweth the common Saviour divesting himself of glory, pinching himself with want, wearying himself with labour, loaded with contumelies, groaning under pain, weltering in blood, breathing out his soul, propounding all this as an example of our charity, and demanding it from us as the most special instance of our grateful obedience to him? What greater endearments can be imagined, what more potent incentives of love, what more indissoluble bands of friendship, than are these? Can such a believer forbear to wish his neighbour well, to have complacence in his good, to sympathise with his adversities, to perform all offices of kindness to him? Can he in the need of his brother *shut up his bowels of compassion*, or withhold his hand from relieving him? Can a man know that God requireth this practice as the noblest fruit of our faith, and most acceptable part of our obedience, which he hath promised to crown with most ample rewards; can he believe that God will recompense his *labour of love* with everlasting rest, and for a small expense of present goods will bestow immense treasures in the other world, and yet abstain from charitable beneficence? Who can forbear sowing, that believeth he shall reap so plentiful a crop; or abstain from dealing in that heavenly trade, whereby he is assured to be so vast a gainer?

In like manner is faith productive of *meekness*, in comporting with injuries, discourtesies, neglects, and provocations of any kind: for who can be fiercely angry, who can entertain any rancorous grudge or displeasure against him whom he believeth his brother, and that upon so many accounts he is obliged to love him? Who that believeth God hath pardoned him so much, and doth continually bear so many wrongs, so many indignities from him, will not in conscience and gratitude toward God, and in compliance with so great an example, bear with the infirmities of his neighbour? Who can look upon the pattern of his Saviour, patiently enduring so many grievous affronts without a disposition to imitate him and to do the like for his sake? Who that taketh himself for a child of God, a citizen of heaven, an heir of eternal glory, can be so much concerned in any trivial accident here; can design to have his passion stirred for any worldly respect? as if his honour could be impaired, or his interest suffer diminution, by any thing said or done here below.

Again, faith is the mother of *sincerity*, that comprehensive virtue which seasoneth all other virtues, and keepeth them sound: for it assuring us, that an all-seeing eye doth view our heart, doth *encompass our paths*, is present to all our closest retirements; that *all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do*,[1] how vain must it appear to us anywise to dissemble, or prevaricate, speaking otherwise than we think, acting otherwise than we pretend, seeming otherwise than we are; concealing our real intents, or disguising them under masks of deceitful appearance! If we believe that we shall be judged, not according to the opinions of men concerning us, or our port and garb in this world, but as we are in ourselves, and according to strictest truth; that in the close of things we shall be set forth in our right colours and complexion, all varnish being wiped away; that all our thoughts, words, and deeds, shall be exposed to most public censure; that hypocrisy will be a sore aggravation of our sin, and much increase our shame; how can we satisfy ourselves otherwise than in the pure integrity of our heart, and clear uprightness of our dealing?

Likewise the admirable virtue of *humility*, or sobriety of mind, doth sprout from faith; informing us, that we have nothing of our own to boast of, but that all the good we have, we can do, we may hope for, are debts we owe to God's pure bounty and mercy; prompting us

[1] Psal. cxxxix. 2; Heb. iv. 13.

to assume nothing to ourselves, but to ascribe all the honour of our endowments, of our performances, of our advantages, unto God; keeping us in continual dependance upon God for the succours of his providence and his grace; representing to us our natural weakness, vileness, and wretchedness, together with the adventitious defects and disadvantages from our wilful misbehaviour, the unworthiness of our lives, the many heinous sins we have committed, and the grievous punishments we have deserved.

He who by the light of faith doth see, that he came naked into the world, heir to nothing but the sad consequences of the original apostacy; that he is a worm, crawling on earth, feeding on dust, and tending to corruption; that he liveth only by reprieve from that fatal sentence, *The day thou sinnest thou shalt die;* that he was a caitiff wretch, a mere slave to sin, a forlorn captive of hell; and that all his recovery thence, or capacity of a better state, is wholly due to mercy; that he subsisteth only upon alms, and hath nothing but his sins and miseries which he may call his own; he that believeth these things, what conceit can he have of himself, what confidence in his own worth, what complacency in his estate?

Faith also doth engage to the virtue of *temperance;* discovering not only the duty, but the necessity thereof, in regard to our state, which is a state of continual exercise and strife; wherefore, as wrestlers with many strong adversaries, as racers for a noble prize, we by good diet and constant labour must keep ourselves in heart, in temper, in breath to perform those combats; according to that of St. Paul, *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.*[l]

Again, Faith is productive of *contentedness* in our state: for how is it possible that he, who is fully satisfied that God appointeth his station, and allotteth his portion to each one; that all occurrences depend on his will, and are managed by his providence, should take any thing amiss; as if it could hap better, than as infinite goodness pleaseth, and infinite wisdom determineth? How can he that believeth God most powerful and able, most kind and willing, ever present and ready to help him, be in any case disconsolate, or despair of seasonable relief? What can discompose him who knoweth himself, if he pleaseth, immoveably happy; that his best good is secure from all attacks, and beyond the reach of any misfortune; that desiring what is best, he cannot fail of his desire; that (himself excepted) all the world cannot considerably wrong or hurt him?

He that is assured those precepts (*Be careful for nothing; Cast all your burden on God; Be content with such things as ye have*) were not given to mock and gull us; that those declarations and promises (*There is no want to them that fear God; No Good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly; There shall no evil happen to the just; The desire of the righteous shall be granted; all things work together for good to them who love God; Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you*[k]) were seriously made, and will surely be performed, how loose must his mind be from all solicitude and anxiety! how steady a calm, how sweet a serenity, will that faith spread over his soul, in regard to all worldly contingencies!

It will also beget a cheerful *tranquillity of mind*, and *peace of conscience*, in regard to our future state; that which St. Paul calleth *all joy* and *peace in believing;*[l] which the apostle to the Hebrews termeth *the confidence and rejoicing of hope;* of which St. Peter saith, *Believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:*[m] for he that is persuaded that God (in whose disposal his fortune and felicity are) is reconciled and kindly affected toward him; that he doth concern himself in designing and procuring his salvation; that to purchase the means thereof for him, the Son of God purposely came down, and suffered death; that an act of oblivion is passed, and a full remission of sins exhibited to him, if he will embrace it; that now *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*

[l] 1 Cor. ix. 25.

[k] Matt. vi. 25; Phil. iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 7; 1 Tim. vi. 17; Heb. xiii. 5; Luke xii. 29; Psal. xxxiv. 9; viii. 11; Prov. xii. 21; x. 24; Rom. viii. 28; Matt. vi. 33.

[l] Rom. xv. 13.

[m] Heb. iii. 6; ix. 14; 1 Pet. i. 8.

Jesus; and that, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God;*[n] that blessing is his portion, and that an eternal heritage of joy is reserved for him; what ease must he find in his conscience, what comfort must possess his heart![o] how effectually will that of the prophet be accomplished in him, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee!*[p]

Again, it is faith which breedeth the *courage*, and upholdeth the *patience*, requisite to support us in our spiritual course.

It doth inspire *courage*, prompting to attempt the bravest enterprises, disposing to prosecute them resolutely, and enabling happily to achieve them: for he that believeth himself in his undertakings backed by Omnipotence, and that, as St. Paul, *he can do all things through Christ strengthening him*, what should he fear to set upon, what difficulty should keep him off, what hazard should dismay him?[q] he that knoweth himself, by reason of the succour attending him, infinitely to overmatch all opposition, whom should he not dare to encounter? May he not well say with David, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?*[r] Let all the world, let earth and hell, combine to invade him, how can that mate his spirit, if he believe they cannot overthrow him or hurt him, being secured by the invincible protection of him to whose will all things do bow;[s] in comparison to whom nothing is puissant, beside whom nothing is really formidable; seeing none but *he* can *kill*, none can touch, the soul?[t]

If we be armed with the spiritual panoply, having our head covered *with the helmet of salvation*, our heart guarded with *the breastplate of righteousness*, our *loins girt about with truth*, our *feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*, all our body sheltered by the impenetrable *shield of faith;* and wielding in our hands by faith the *penetrant two-edged sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:* what assaults may we not sustain, what foes shall we not easily repel?[u]

The most redoubtable enemy we have is our own *flesh*, which, with a mighty force of violent appetites and impetuous passions, is ever struggling with our reason, and warring against our soul;[v] yet it faith alone dareth to resist, and is able to quell; opposing to the present delights of sense the hopes of future joy, quashing transitory satisfactions by the fears of endless torment.

The *world* is another powerful enemy; ever striving, by its corrupt principles, by its bad examples, by its naughty fashions, by its menaces of persecution, damage, and disgrace, by its promises of vain honour, base profit, and foul pleasure, to overthrow and undo us; but a resolute faith will defeat its attempts: for, *He*, (saith St. John) *that is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith:*[w] the faith of a better world will defend us from the frowns and the flatteries of this; the riches, glories and joys of heaven, thereby presented to our minds, will secure us from being enchanted with the wealth, splendours, and pleasures of earth.

Another fierce adversary is the cursed *fiend;* who ever, *like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking to devour us*,[x] or like a treacherous snake lieth in wait to bite us; raising panic fears to daunt and affright us; laying subtle trains of temptation to abuse and seduce us: but him by resistance we may easily put to flight; for, *Resist the devil* (saith St. James) *and he will flee from you;*[y] and how we must resist him St. Peter telleth us, *Whom resist steadfast in faith;* and St. Paul also, *Above all* (saith he) *taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one:*[z] if we hold forth this glittering shield, it will dazzle his sight, and damp his courage; being not able to endure its lustre, or stand its opposition, he will instantly

[n] Rom. viii. 1; v. 1.
[o] Col. i. 5.
[p] Isa. xxvi. 3.
[q] Phil. iv. 13; (Phil. i. 28; 1 John iv. 4.)
[r] Psal. xxvii. 1; cxviii. 6.
[s] Chrys. tom. vii. p. 51; Psal. xlvi. 1, 2.
[t] Matt. x. 28.
[u] Eph. vi. 15; 1 Thess. v. 8; Rom. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. vi. 7; Heb. iv. 12.
[v] Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii. 23; 1 Pet. ii. 11.
[w] 1 John v. 4; (2 Pet. i. 4; Eph. iv. 22.)
[x] 1 Pet. v. 8.
[y] James iv. 7; Eph. iv. 27.
[z] 1 Pet. v. 9; Eph. vi. 16.

retire; fearing that by our victory over his temptations (through reliance on God's help, and adherence to his truth) our reward shall be heightened, and his torment (the torment of his improsperous envy and baffled malice) be increased.

Faith also will arm us with *patience* to endure whatever events shall be dispensed, with alacrity and comfort; lightening the most heavy burdens imposed on us, sweetening the most distasteful occurrences incident to us: for,

He who is persuaded, that by any damage here sustained for conscience toward God, he shall become a huge gainer, *receiving* (as the gospel promiseth) *an hundred fold, and inheriting eternal life*, what will he not gladly lose? will he not willingly put forth all he hath in this most profitable usury?[a] will he not as those Hebrews did, *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that he hath in heaven a better and an enduring substance?*[b]

He who believeth, that in regard to any disgrace cast on him for his virtue, he shall be honoured by God, and crowned with heavenly glory,[c] will he not in a manner be proud and ambitious of such disgrace? will he not, as the apostles did, *rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ?*[d]

He who trusteth, that for a little pains taken in God's service, he shall receive πολὺν μισθὸν, *abundant wages*, far exceeding the merit of his labour, will he not cheerfully bear any toil or drudgery therein?[e]

He who, with St. Paul, *computeth that the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed;*[f] and that *those light momentary afflictions do work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory;*[g] will they not indeed be light unto him? will he not feel them lying on them as a few straws or feathers?

He who conceiveth our Lord's word true, that *by losing his life he shall find it*, or that death shall become to him a door into a happy immortality, would he not gladly upon such terms be *killed all the day long*, and *be always delivered unto death for Jesus?*[h]

He who by faith is assured that any disasters befalling him are not inflictions of wrath, but expressions of love toward him, by God in kindness dispensed as trials of his faith,[i] as exercises of his virtue, as occasions of his acquiring more plentiful rewards, how can he be disgusted at them, or discomposed by them? why should he not rather accept them as favours, as felicities, with a thankful and joyful heart? *counting it* (as St. James adviseth) *all joy when he falleth into divers temptations.*[j]

In fine, it is faith alone which can plant in us that which is the root of all contentedness and all patience; a just indifference and unconcernedness about all things here: it alone can untack our minds and affections from this world, rearing our souls from earth, and fixing them in heaven;[k] for if we are persuaded there is a state of life infinitely more desirable than the best condition here; if we believe there are things attainable by us, incomparably better than any which this world affordeth; in respect to which all these glories are but smoke, all these riches are but dirt, all these delights are but dreams, all these businesses are but triflings, all these substances are but shadows;* how in our minds can we prize, how in our affections can we cleave unto these things? how then can we find in our hearts to spend upon them more care or pain than is needful?

He that taketh himself here to be out of his element, that he is but *a stranger and sojourner upon earth*, that he *hath here no abiding city*, no country, no house, no land, no treasure, no considerable interest, but that he is merely wayfaring, in passage toward his true home and heavenly country;† *the Jerusalem*

[a] Matt. xix. 29; Luke xviii. 30; Phil. iii. 8.
[b] Heb. x. 34.
[c] Matt. v. 12.
[d] Acts v. 41; 1 Pet. iv. 14.
[e] Matt. v. 12; Luke vi. 35; 1 Cor. iii. 8.
[f] Rom. viii. 18.
[g] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

* Omnia imaginaria in seculo, et nihil veri. —*Tert. de Cor.* c. 13.

† Ἡ πρώτη ἀρετὴ, καὶ ἡ πᾶσα ἀρετὴ τὸ ξένον εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.—Chrys. in Heb. xi. 13.

[h] Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Luke xvii. 33; (Psal. cxxvi. 5;) 2 Tim. ii. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 13; Rom. viii. 17; 2 Cor. iv. 10; Phil. i. 29; Rom. viii. 36; 2 Cor. iv. 11; 1 Cor. iv. 9; Acts xx. 24; xxi. 13.
[i] James i. 3; 1 Pet. i. 5; Rom. v. 3; Matt. v. 12.
[j] James i. 2; Rom. v. 3; Luke vi. 23.
[k] Col. iii. 1.

above, whereof he is a citizen, where his grand concerns do lie, where he hath reserved for him immoveable possessions and unvaluable treasures; where he is designed to enjoy most noble privileges and most illustrious dignities in the court of the great King; how can he have his heart here sticking in this earthly clay, entangled with the petty cares, amused with the sorry entertainments of this life? how can he otherwise than with St. Paul be dead, and *crucified to this world?** how can he withhold his mind from soaring thither in contemplation, and in affection dwelling there, whither his desires and hopes do all tend, where his joy and felicity are found, where the great objects of his esteem and love do reside?

But you will perhaps interpose, and say, These are indeed fine sayings, but where do such effects appear? who, I pray, doth practise according to these notions? where is that gallant to be found, who doth work so great exploits? where may we discern that height of piety, that tenderness of charity, that meek comportment with injuries and affronts, that clear sincerity, that depth of humility, that strictness of temperance, that perfect contentedness, and undisturbed calmness of mind, that stoutness of courage and stiffness of patience, which you talk of as the undoubted issues of faith? who is the man that with such glee doth hug afflictions, or biddeth adversity so welcome to his home? where dwell they, who so little regard this world, or so much affect the other? do we not see men run as if they were wild after preferment, wealth, and pleasure? what do they else, but scrape and scramble and scuffle for these things? doth not every man moan the scantness of his lot, doth not every man flinch at any trouble, doth not every one with all his might strive to rid himself of any thing disgustful to his sense or fancy? Are not therefore such encomiums of faith mere speculations, or brave rhodomontades of divinity?

The objection, I confess, is a shrewd one; but I must reply to it: You say, Where are such effects? where are such men? I ask then, Where is faith? where are believers? show me the one, and I will show you the other: if such effects do not appear, it is no argument that faith cannot produce them, but a sign that faith is wanting; as if a tree doth not put forth in due season, we conclude the root is dead; if a fountain yield no streams, we suppose it dried up: *Show me* (saith St. James) *thy faith by thy works;*[l] implying, that if good works do not shine forth in the conversation, it is suspicious there is no true faith in the heart: for such faith is not a feeble weening, or a notion swimming in the head; it is not a profession issuing from the mouth; it is not following such a garb, or adhering to such a party; but a persuasion fixed in the heart by good reason, by firm resolution, by lively sense: it is *with the heart* (as St. Paul saith) *man believeth unto righteousness;*[m] that is the faith we speak of, and to which we ascribe the production of so great and worthy effects; if a man wanteth that, attested by practice suitable, though he know all the points exactly, though he readily will say *amen* to every article of the Creed, though he wear all the badges of a Christian, though he frequent the congregations, and comply with the forms of our religion, yet is he really an infidel; for is he not an infidel who denieth God? and is he not such a renegado who liveth impiously? He is so in St. Paul's account; for, *They profess* (saith he of such persons) *that they know God, but in works they deny him;*[n] and, *He is not a Jew*, saith the same apostle (he is not a Christian, may we by parity of reason affirm), *who is one outwardly; but he is a Christian who is one inwardly, and faith is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God:*[o] we may attribute to a barren conceit, or to a formal profession, the name of faith, but it is in an equivocal or wide sense; as a dead man is called a man, or a dry stick resting in the earth a tree; for so *faith* (saith St. James) *without works is dead;*[p] is indeed but a trunk, or carcass of faith, resembling it in outward shape, but void of its *spirit* and life.[q]

To our infidelity, therefore, that over-

* Gal. vi. 14; ii. 20. Ἐκεῖ μετεωρίζει τὴν ψυχὴν ἡ πίστις.—Chrys. tom. v. Or. 55.

[l] James ii. 18.
[m] Rom. x. 8.
[n] Tit. i 16.
[o] Rom. ii. 28.
[p] James ii. 17.
[q] James ii. 26.

spreading vice; to the unsincerity, or deadness of our faith, the great defects of our practice are to be imputed; that is the grand source from which impiety doth so overflow; that so few instances of sprightly virtue are visible, may be a sign the time is the same, or very like to that, of which our Lord saith, *When the Son of man cometh, shall he indeed find faith upon the earth?*[r]

But if such effects can now rarely be found, yet time hath been, when they were more rife, scarce any time hath been quite destitute of them; every age since the foundation of things may have tokens and trophies to show of faith's victorious efficacy; so many actions as there have been truly great and glorious, so many gallant feats have been achieved by faith: if we survey the lives of the ancient patriarchs, of the prophets, of the apostles, of the martyrs and confessors of true religion, their faith in all their works is most conspicuous.

Faith recommended that *excellent sacrifice of Abel*[s] to divine acceptance, and advanced him to the rank of first martyr for piety.

On the wings of faith did Enoch mount to heaven, snatching the reward due to his faithful, and therefore well-pleasing, obedience.

Faith preserved Noah from two mighty deluges, one of sin, the other of water, overflowing the earth; by it he stemmed the torrent of the one, and rode on the back of the other; it encouraged him to be *a preacher of righteousness*[t] against the grain, and a practiser of it against the fashion of the world, not regarding the common hatred and envy which he did incur thereby; it moved him to undertake that great and strange work of building the ark, for a sanctuary and seminary of mankind; the type of that spiritual vessel, by embarking into which through faith we are saved from utter ruin.

Faith disposed Abraham to forsake his country and home, his estate, his kindred, following divine conduct *he knew not whither;*[v] to wander abroad and sojourn among barbarous strangers: faith inclined him, at God's command, to sacrifice his only son, a goodly youth in the flower of his age and hopes, worthily most dear unto him; the son of his old age, and the comfort thereof, given to him by miracle and in special favour; the prop of his family, and the heir of promise, by whom his seed was to be propagated, and his memory to flourish; him was he ready in obedience with his own hand to slay, quelling nature and his bowels, thwarting his own hopes, defying all semblances of contradiction or clashing between the commands and promises of God.

Faith, through the rudest efforts of envy and malice, through the dismal calamities of exile and slavery, through hideous snares of temptation, through villainous slanders, through loathsome prisons and fetters of iron, all along sustained with admirable moderation and presence of mind, did rear up Joseph to the helm of that great kingdom.

The same inclined Moses to exchange the dignities and delights of a court for a state of vagrancy and servility; it heartened him to outbrave the invincible obstinacy of a mighty prince; it steeled him with patience to conduct for the space of forty years, through a wild desert, a most perverse and mutinous herd of people.

Faith was mother of that renowned patience which exhausted Satan's quiver, spent all his artillery, and wore out his invention in suggesting mischiefs:[w] *I know that my Redeemer liveth,*[x] was the rock on which that unshakeable patience of Job was founded.

That pricked the ruddy stripling forward, naked and unarmed, with undaunted heart and countenance, to invade the monster of Gath, that tower of flesh, swelling with rage and pride, and all fenced with brass and steel: *Thou comest to me* (saith he) *with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts:*[y] there lay his confidence, thence sprung his admirable courage.

To *this* the bold attempts, and the glorious victories of Joshua, of Gideon, of Barak, of Jephtha, of Samson, of Jonathan, of the Maccabees, are worthily as-

[r] Luke xviii. 8.
[s] Heb. xi. 4. [t] 2 Pet. ii. 5; Gen. vii. 2.
[v] Heb. xi. 8; Chrys. tom. vii. p. 17.
[w] Chrys. tom. vii. p. 17. [x] Job xix. 25.
[y] 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

scribed, who with small forces, upon great disadvantages, did assault, did vanquish mighty enemies and oppressors.

This inflamed the zeal of Elias, by which he *alone* did check and control the degenerate follies of his nation, surmounting the indignation of princes which favoured them;[z] it fed him in the wilderness by the purveyance of ravens; it framed the wheels of that fiery chariot, which transported him into heaven.[a]

This made Jeremy, with like zeal and courage, dare to carry most unwelcome news and unpleasant messages to an outrageous people, not daunted by their angry menaces or cruel misusages; *his feet sunk into the mire*, but faith bore up his heart above all discouragement.[b]

This saved the conscience of those three brave youths clear from that impiety into which barbarous violence would have driven them, so that neither the fury of that great monarch nor his gaping furnace could terrify them into sin; faith putting into their mouths those manful words: *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up:*[c] their faith carried them undaunted into the flames, and kept them untouched within them; so that they became as gold not wasted, but tried and purified in the furnace.

Neither could a danger no less terrible scare the noble Daniel from his devotions: his faith did *stop the lions' mouths;* and, *he* (saith the text) *was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he trusted in his God.*[d]

Such exploits of spiritual prowess were achieved by an Old Testament faith, relying upon God's attributes and providence, although wanting a clear revelation of the promises, which then lay wrapped up in mysteries and shadows; but more heroical acts of fortitude and patience did the bright sunshine of grace and glory upon the minds of our apostles and primitive saints produce: animated by faith, a little troop of them marched out with resolution to attack all the powers of hell, and to beat down the kingdom of darkness, to despatch all the prejudices and errors of mankind, and to subdue the world to the obedience of Christ; so armed, successfully did they knock down and trample upon all opposition to their glorious designs; they defeated all the secular power and policy, they baffled all the wit, the learning, the eloquence, which stood in their way, or gave them resistance; they triumphed over persecutions, and in regard to all sufferings *were more than conquerors;* to forsake and forfeit all they had, was their gain; to *have nothing*, was their wealth;[e] to incur disgraces, was their glory; to be in continual labour and travail, was their ease; fastings, hunger, and thirst, were their pleasure, their feast, their luxury; prisons were chapels to them, in which they preached, and prayed, and sang praises to God;[f] their joy was to suffer; to receive stripes, and undergo torments, was their triumph and their glory; they constantly defied, they often courted, death.

That they were able to perform such prodigious acts, and to endure things so insupportable, was not from a stupid insensibility of things, from a sturdiness of spirit, or stiffness of humour; but from a true magnanimity inspired by faith; because they were persuaded of God's will, because they confided in God's help, because they relied on God's word, because they did expect rewards from God able to satisfy for all their pains and losses; this made them to undertake so bold enterprises, and carried them with insuperable constancy through all; hence were they glad to abandon their ease and pleasure, to prostitute their honour and reputation, to part with their substance, to venture their safety, to sacrifice their lives for God's truth: *Therefore do we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe*, is the short account which St.

[z] 1 Kings xviii. 36; xix. 20.
[a] 2 Kings ii. 11. [b] Jer. xxxviii. 4, 6.
[c] Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18.
[d] Heb. xi. 33; Dan. vi. 10, 22, 23.
[e] Rom. viii. 35; Eph. iii. 13.
[f] Acts xvi. 25.

Paul rendereth of it;[g] and infallibly the like effects will faith produce, wherever it is found, in a degree proportionable to its sincerity and strength.

A grain of faith (our Saviour saith) *is able to remove mountains;* that is, to accomplish things in appearance very strange and difficult: and, *To him that believeth, all things are possible*, saith the same mouth of truth: and, *He* (saith our Lord again) *that believeth in me, the works that I do he also shall do; and greater works than these shall he do.*[h] If this be true in reference to works concerning the frame of nature, it is surely no less true in regard to those which lie within the more proper sphere of faith, to moral and spiritual operations: if faith can obtain help of God, enabling to transfer a mountain, it also can procure his grace disposing to restrain an appetite, or repress a passion.

Now that which is in itself so worthy and lovely, which is attended with so good consorts, which is the daughter of so excellent causes, the sister of so great virtues, the parent of so admirable effects, how can it otherwise than be very precious, very laudable, very acceptable? how can we at all wonder that it should be graced with such commendations, and crowned with such rewards?

Let us therefore (to conclude) be exhorted, if we do want it, to endeavour the acquist of it by all proper means (by serious contemplation and study, by prayer to God, by voiding all obstructions of it:) if we have it, to hold it fast, to cherish it, to improve it, as by all good ways, so especially by good practice;[i] that we may produce the good fruits, and obtain the happy rewards thereof, through the mercies of God in Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all praise.

Now the God of all hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.[j] Amen.

[g] 1 Tim. iv. 10; (Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 11; 1 Pet. i. 7; iv. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 8;) Matt. xvii. 20; xxi. 21.

[h] Luke xvii. 6; 1 Cor. xiii. 2; Mark xi. 23; ix. 23; John xiv. 12; Chrys. tom vii. Or. 64.

[i] Chrys. in Joh. Or. 6. [j] Rom. xv. 13.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON IV.

OF JUSTIFYING FAITH.

ROM. v. 1.—*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Therefore: that word implies the text to be a conclusion (by way of inference, or of recapitulation) resulting from the precedent discourse; it is indeed the principal conclusion, which (as being supposed a peculiar and a grand part of the Christian doctrine, and deserving therefore a strong proof and clear vindication) St. Paul designed by several arguments to make good. Upon the words, being of such importance, I should so treat, as first to explain them, or to settle their true sense; then to make some practical application of the truths they contain.

As to the explicatory part, I should consider first, what the faith is, by which we are said to be justified; 2. what being justified doth import; 3. how by such faith we are so justified; 4. what the peace with God is, here adjoined to justification; 5. what relation the whole matter bears to our Lord Jesus Christ; or how through him being justified, we have peace with God; in the prosecution of which particulars it would appear, who the persons justified are, and who justifies us; with other circumstances incident.

I shall at this time only insist upon the first particular, concerning the notion of faith proper to this place; in order to the resolution of which inquiry, I shall lay down some useful observations: and,

1. First, I observe, that *faith*, or belief, in the vulgar acceptation, doth signify (as we have it briefly described in Aristotle's Topics) a σφοδρὰ ὑπόληψις[a] *an earnest opinion* or persuasion of mind concerning the truth of some matter propounded. Such an opinion being produced by, or grounded upon some forcible reason (either immediate evidence of the matter, or sense and experience, or some strong argument of reason, or some

[a] Top. 4, 5.

credible testimony;* for whatever we assent unto, and judge true upon any such grounds and inducements, we are commonly said to believe), this is the popular acceptation of the word; and according thereto I conceive it usually signifies in holy scripture; which being not penned by masters of human art or science, nor directed to persons of more than ordinary capacities or improvements, doth not intend to use words otherwise than in the most plain and ordinary manner.

Belief therefore in general, I suppose, denotes a firm persuasion of mind concerning the truth of what is propounded; whether it be some one single proposition (as when Abraham believed that *God was able to perform what he had promised;* and Sarah, that *God who had promised, was faithful,*[b]) or some system of propositions, as when we are said to *believe God's word* (that is, all which by his prophets was in his name declared;) to *believe the truth*[c] (that is, all the propositions taught in the true religion as so;) *to believe God's commandments*[d] (that is, the doctrines in God's law to be true, and the precepts thereof to be good;) to *believe the Gospel*[e] (that is, to be persuaded of the truth of all propositions asserted or declared in the gospel.)

2. I observe, secondly, that whereas frequently some person, or single thing, is represented (*verbo tenus*) as the object of faith, this doth not prejudice, or in effect alter the notion I mentioned; for it is only a figurative manner of speaking, whereby is always meant the being persuaded concerning the truth of some proposition, or propositions, relating to that person or thing: for otherwise it is unintelligible how any incomplex thing, as they speak, can be the complete or immediate object of belief. Beside simple apprehension (or framing the bare idea of a thing) there is no operation of a man's mind terminated upon one single object; and belief of a thing surely implies more than a simple apprehension thereof: what it is, for instance, to believe this or that proposition about a man, or a tree, (that a man is such a kind of thing, that a tree hath this or that property), is very easy to conceive; but the phrase believing a man, or a tree, (taken properly, or excluding figures), is altogether insignificant and unintelligible: indeed, to believe, πιστεύειν is the effect τοῦ πεπεῖσθαι, of a persuasive argument, and the result of ratiocination; whence in scripture it is commended, or discommended, as implying a good or bad use of reason. The proper object of faith is therefore some proposition deduced from others by discourse; as it is said, that *many of the Samaritans believed in Christ because of the woman's word, who testified that he told her all that ever she did:*[f] or as St. Thomas *believed because he saw;* or as when it is said that *many believed on our Lord's name, beholding the miracles which he did:*[g] when, then, for example, the Jews are required to believe Moses (or to believe in Moses, after the Hebrew manner of speaking), it is meant, to be persuaded of the truth of what he delivered, as proceeding from Divine revelation;[h] or to believe him to be what he professed himself, a messenger or prophet of God. So, *to believe the prophets,*[i] or in the prophets,* was to be persuaded concerning the truth of what they uttered in God's name (that the doctrines were true, the commands were to be obeyed, the threats and promises should be performed, the predictions should be accomplished: *to believe all which the prophets did say,* as our Saviour speaks; *to believe all things written in the prophets,*[j] as St. Paul.) So, to *believe God's works* (a phrase we have in the Psalms) signifies, to be persuaded that those works did proceed from God, or were the effects of his good providence:[k] *to believe*

* Aut proba esse quæ credis; aut si non probas, quomodo credis?—*Tertul. Adv. Marc.* v. 1.

Ὅταν γὰρ πῶς πιστεύῃ, καὶ γνώριμοι αὐτῷ ὦσιν αἱ ἀρχαὶ, ἐπίσταται.—Arist. Eth. vi. 3.

Ἀριστοτέλης τὸ ἐπόμενον τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ κρῖμα ὡς ἀληθὲς, τὸ δέ τι πίστιν εἶναί φησι.—Clem. Strom. ii. p. 289.

Ἔνιοι γὰρ πιστεύουσιν οὐδὲν ἧττον οἷς δοξάζουσιν, ἢ ἕτεροι οἷς ἐπίστανται.—Arist. Eth. vii. 3.

[b] Rom. iv. 21; Heb xi. 19, 11; Psal. cvi. 24; lxxviii. 32.

[c] 2 Thess. ii. 12. [d] Psal. cxix. 66.

* Mark i. 15; Phil. i. 27.

[f] John iv. 39. [g] John xx. 29; ii. 23.

[h] Exod. 31; xix. 9; John v. 45, &c.

[i] 2 Chron. xx. 20.

[j] Luke xxiv. 25; Acts xxiv. 14.

[k] Psal. lxxviii. 32.

* (בנביאיו)

in man[l] (that which is so often prohibited and dissuaded) denotes the being persuaded, that man in our need is able to relieve and succour us: lastly, *to believe in God*[m] (a duty so often enjoined and inculcated) is to be persuaded that God is true in whatever he says; faithful in performance of what he promises; perfectly wise, powerful, and good; able and willing to do us good: the being persuaded, I say, of all these propositions, or such of them as suit the present circumstances and occasion, is to believe in God: thus, in fine, to believe on a person or thing, is only a short expression (figuratively) denoting the being persuaded of the truth of some proposition relating in one way or other, to that person or thing, (which way is commonly discernible by considering the nature or state of such a person or such a thing;) the use of which observation may afterwards appear.

3. I observe, thirdly, that (as it is ordinary in like cases concerning the use of words) the word *belief* is by a kind of *synecdoche* (or *metonymy*, if you please) so commonly extended in signification, as, together with such a persuasion as we spoke of, to imply whatever by a kind of necessity, natural or moral, doth result from it; so comprehending those acts of will, those affections of soul, and those deeds, which may be presumed consequent upon such a persuasion: for instance, when God commanded Abraham to forsake his country, promising him a happy establishment in the land of Canaan, with a perpetual blessing upon his posterity; Abraham was persuaded concerning the power and fidelity of God, and concerning the truth of what was promised and foretold; in that persuasion his faith, according to the first, proper, and restrained sense, did consist: but because from such a persuasion (being sincere, and strong enough) there did naturally and duly result a satisfaction, or acquiescence in the matter enjoined as best to be done; a choice and resolution to comply with God's appointment;[n] an effectual obedience; a cheerful expectation of a good issue thereupon; therefore all those dispositions of soul and actions concurring become expressed by the name of faith (that first persuasion being the principle and root of them:) for it is for his faith that he is highly commended; it is for it that he obtained so favourable an approbation and acceptance from God. Yet supposing Abraham to have had such a persuasion concerning God; and yet to have disliked what God required, or to have resolved against doing it, or to have indeed disobeyed, or to have disregarded the happy success; it is plain that Abraham as to the whole matter deserved rather much blame, than any commendation; and would not upon that account have had *righteousness imputed to him*, and have been *called the friend of God*:[o] when, therefore, his *faith* is so magnified, that word comprehends not his bare persuasion only, but all those concomitants thereof, which if they had not gone along therewith, it had been a proof that such a persuasion was not sincere (not ἀνυπόκριτος πιστις *an undissembled faith*; such as St. Paul commends in Timothy), or not strong enough (not ἀδιάκριτος πίστις, *an undoubting faith*), but a *weak*, *a small*, *a dead*, an ineffectual faith; which come under blame and reproof; but the effect showed, that he did not, as St. Paul says, ἀσθενεῖν τῇ πίστει, had not a weak, or sickly faith; nor *staggered at the promise of God*; but *was strong in faith, giving glory to God*;[p] which he did not only in believing his word, but in suiting his affections, and yielding obedience thereto: (πίστει ὑπήκουσεν ἐξελθεῖν), *by faith he obeyed, so as to forsake his country*, says the apostle to the Hebrews; and faith thus taken is not only a single act of a man's understanding or will, but a complex of many dispositions and actions, diffused through divers faculties of a man, denoting the whole complication of good dispositions and actions relating to one matter; which attend upon a true and earnest persuasion concerning it; right choice, submission, and satisfaction of mind, firm resolution, dutiful obedience, constant and cheerful hope, or the like.

4. I observe more nearly to our pur-

[l] Jer. xvii. 5; xlvi. 25.
[m] Psal. cxviii. 8, &c.
[n] Rom. iv. 20.
[o] James ii. 23.
[p] 1 Tim. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 5; James iii. 17; Rom. iv. 20; xiv. 1; 1 Cor. viii. 10; Rom. iv. 19; Matt. vi. 30; viii. 26, &c.; James ii. 17, 20; Gal. v. 6; Heb. xi. 8.

pose, fourthly, that the faith here spoken of (being here and otherwhere put absolutely, or by itself, without any adjunct of limitation or distinction) is often set down with terms annexed thereto, explaining and determining it; being sometimes styled the *faith of Christ*, *of Jesus*, *of God* (τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τοῦ Θεοῦ), sometimes *faith upon Christ* (εἰς Χριστὸν, and ἐπὶ Χριστὸν), *faith in Christ* (ἐν Χριστῷ), *faith to Christ*, to the Lord, to God, (πιστεύειν τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ Κυρίῳ, τῷ Θεῷ,) *faith upon the name of Christ*, (εἰς ὄνομα), *faith of his name* (πίστις τοῦ ὀνόματος), *faith to his name*, (τῷ ὀνόματι:) which phrases, all questionless denoting the same thing, do imply this faith to consist in being persuaded concerning the truth of some propositions chiefly relating to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, either as grounded upon his authority, or appertaining to his person.[q] Now, what such propositions are, we may learn from other expressions, descriptions, or circumlocutions declaring the nature and quality of this faith: it is sometimes called *the belief of the gospel* (that is, of the whole system of doctrines, and laws, and promises, and prophecies, taught, delivered, or declared, by Christ and his apostles: *Repent* (said St. John the Baptist, *and believe the gospel*), *the belief of the truth* (that body of truth, signally so called, which was taught by the same authors), the *acknowledgment of the* same *truth*[r] πιστὸς, and ἐπεγνωκὼς τὴν ἀλήθειαν, are in St. Paul the same.[s]) Equivalent to those descriptions of this faith are those expressions, which set it out by yielding assent (generally) to what our Lord Christ and his apostles taught, or to some chief points of their doctrine, inferring the rest; the *believing*,[t] *hearing*,[u] *receiving the word of God*, of *Christ*, of the *apostles*,[v] the *receiving Christ's testimony*,[w] and (which is the same) *receiving Christ himself*;[x] *coming unto Christ*[y] (that is, as disciples to their Master, as servants to their Lord, as persons oppressed and enslaved to their Deliverer;) *the believing* (and *knowing*) *that Jesus was sent by God, and came from him*;[z] the believing that Jesus was what he professed himself to be;[a] the *confessing* that *Jesus Christ is come into the flesh; that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, he which should come in the world; the King of Israel; that God raised him from the dead*;[b] by the belief of which one point, as involving the rest, St. Paul expresseth this faith: *If thou* (saith he) *shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*[c]

The result, upon considering all which expressions declaratory of the nature of this faith (for this surely is not different from that which is so commonly otherwhere represented in our Saviour's and his apostle's discourses and writings, as a great duty required of us; as a virtue (or act of virtue) highly commendable, as an especial instrument of our salvation, as a necessary condition prerequisite to our partaking the benefits and privileges by Divine favour conferred on Christians)—the result, I say, is this, that by this faith (as to the first and primary sense thereof) is understood the being truly and firmly persuaded in our minds, that Jesus was what he professed himself to be, and what the apostles testified him to be, the Messias, by God designed, foretold, and promised to be sent into the world, to redeem, govern, instruct, and save mankind; our Redeemer and Saviour, our Lord and Master, our King and Judge; the great High Priest, and Prophet of God; the being assured of these, and all other propositions connexed with these; or, in

[q] Rom. iii. 3, 21. 26; Gal. ii. 16, 20; iii. 22; Phil. iii. 9; Rev. ii. 13; xiv. 12; εἰς, Acts xx. 21; xxiv. 24; xxvi. 18; Col. ii. 5, &c.; ἐπὶ, Heb. vi. 1; Acts ix. 42; xxii. 19; &c. ἐν, Gal. iii. 26; 1 Tim. iii. 13; 2 Tim. iii. 15; Acts xiii. 39, &c.; τῷ Χρ. Acts v. 14; xvi. 34; xviii. 28; xxvii. 25; John v. 24; x. 37, 38; xiv. 11, &c.; εἰς ὄνομα, John i. 2; ii. 23; 1 John v. 13, &c.; Acts iii. 16, τοῦ; 1 John iii. 23, τῷ.

[r] Mark i. 15; Phil. i. 27; 1 Pet. iv. 17; 2 Thess. ii. 12, 13.

[s] 1 Tim. iv. 3; ii. 4; Tit. i. 1; Heb. x. 26; 1 Tim. ii. 4, &c.

[t] John v. 46, 47.

[u] John xii. 47.

[v] John xii. 48; xvii. 8; Acts xi. 1.

[w] John iii. 33.

[x] John i. 12; xiii. 20; v. 43.

[y] John vi. 37, 44, 65; v. 40; Matt. xi. 28.

[z] John xvii. 8; v. 24; vi. 29; xi. 42; xvi. 30; xvii. 21.

[a] John viii. 24; xiii. 19.

[b] 1 John iv. 2, 15; v. 1, 5; John iv. 42; i. 49; xx. 31; Acts viii. 37.

[c] Rom. x. 9; Ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ πατρὸς καὶ μαθὼν, John vi. 45.

short, the being thoroughly persuaded of the truth of that gospel which was revealed and taught by Jesus and his apostles. That this notion is true, those descriptions of faith, and phrases expressing it, do sufficiently show; the nature and reason of the thing doth confirm the same; for that such a faith is, in its kind and order, apt and sufficient to promote God's design of saving us, to render us capable of God's favour; to purge our hearts, and work that change of mind which is necessary in order to the obtaining God's favour, and enjoying happiness; to produce that obedience which God requires of us, and without which we cannot be saved; these things are the natural results of such a persuasion concerning those truths; as natural, as the desire and pursuit of any good doth arise from the clear apprehension thereof, or as the shunning of any mischief doth follow from the like apprehension: as a persuasion that wealth is to be got thereby, makes the merchant to undergo the dangers and pains of a long voyage (verifying that, *Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos, Per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes;*) as the persuasion that health may thereby be recovered, engages a man not only to take down the most unsavoury potions, but to endure cuttings and burnings (*ut valeas ferrum patieris et ignes;*) as a persuasion, that refreshment is to be found in a place, doth effectually carry the hungry person thither: so a strong persuasion that the Christian religion is true, and the way of obtaining happiness, and of escaping misery, doth naturally produce a subjection of heart, and an obedience thereto; and accordingly we see the highest of those effects which the gospel offers, or requires, are assigned to this faith, as results from it, or adjuncts thereof. Regeneration: *Whosoever* (saith St. John) *believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.*[d] Spiritual union with God: *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God: If what ye have heard from the beginning abide in you, ye shall also abide in the Father and the Son.*[e] The obtaining God's love: *The Father loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came from God.* Victory over the world: *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he who believeth that Jesus is the son of God?*[f] Freedom from spiritual slavery, and becoming true disciples of Christ: *If ye abide in my word, ye are truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.*[g] Obtaining everlasting life: *He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me*[h] (that is, who believeth my word, which is indeed the word of God, who sent me, and in whose name I speak), *hath everlasting life.* And, *These things were written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing it you may have life in his name.*[i] Interest in God and Christ: *He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he* (οὗτος) *hath the Father and the Son. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth upon me hath eternal life.*[j] Rising with Christ (that is, as to capacity and right:) *Buried with him in baptism, wherein you are risen with him through faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead.*[k] Being saved: *Whoever confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus to be the Son of God, and in his heart believes that God raised him from the dead, shall be saved.*[l] Lastly, being justified: for, St. Paul adjoins, *a man believeth* (in the manner before mentioned) *to righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.*[m] So we see, that the chief of those excellent benefits, to the procuring of which faith (however understood) is anywise conducible or requisite, do belong to the persuasion concerning evangelical truths. We may also observe in the history concerning our Lord's and his apostles' proceedings toward persons whom they had converted to Christianity, and did admit to a participation of the privileges thereof, that no other faith was by them required in order thereto: upon such a persuasion appearing, they received them into the church, baptized them, pronounced

[d] 1 John v. 1. [e] 1 John iv. 15; ii. 24.

[f] John xvi. 27; *Vide* 2 Thess. ii. 13; Eph. i. 13; Acts xv. 7, 9; 1 John v. 5.
[g] John viii. 31, 32. [h] John v. 24.
[i] John xx. 31.
[j] 2 John 9; John vi. 47; iii. 36; xv. 16.
[k] Col. ii. 12. [l] Rom. x. 9.
[m] Rom. x. 10.

unto them an absolution from their sins, and a reception into God's favour. This was the faith of Martha, which gave her interest in the promise of eternal life: *Every one* (said our Saviour to her) *living, and believing in me, shall never die: Dost thou believe this? She saith unto him, Yes, Lord, I have believed that thou art the Christ the Son of God, which should come into the world.*[n] This was the faith for which our Saviour commends St. Peter, and pronounces him happy.[o] Upon appearance of this faith, St. Peter baptized and admitted into the church the three thousand persons whom he had converted. (*Then*, says the text, *they who gladly* (or willingly) *received his word* (that is, were persuaded of the truth of that doctrine, which is before set down concerning our Lord) *were baptized; and the same day were added* (to the church) *about three thousand souls.** Upon the like faith the Samaritans were baptized, ὅτε ἐπίστευσαν τῷ Φιλίππῳ, *when they gave credence to Philip's doctrine.*[p]) And upon the same account did the same evangelist say it was lawful to baptize the Eunuch, and accordingly did perform it: *If* (saith Philip) *thou believest with thy whole heart, it is lawful* (or, thou mayest be baptized.) *He answering said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. So he baptized him.*[q] This was the faith, upon which St. Paul baptized Lydia, *when she had yielded assent unto* (so προσέχειν doth import in the Acts; not only προσέχειν νοῦν to yield attention, but προσέχειν πίστιν to give assent unto) *the things spoken by St. Paul.*[r] Thus also of those Jews in another place of the Acts, when St. Paul had *opened and alleged, out of the scriptures, that Christ was to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, and that Jesus was the Christ*, it is said, τινὲς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπείσθησαν, καὶ προσεκληρώθησαν, *were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas*[s] (that is, were received into Christian communion with them.) The same is intimated in other passages of the apostolical history;[t] by all which it appears, that the apostles' method was to declare and inculcate the main points of the Christian history and doctrine, attesting to the one, and proving the other, by testimonies and arguments proper to that purpose; and whoever of their hearers declared himself persuaded of the truth of what they taught, that he did heartily assent thereto, and resolved to profess and practise accordingly, him, without more to do, they presently baptized, and instated him in the privileges appertaining to Christainity; or, in St. Paul's language, did justify them, according to their subordinate manner, as the ministers of God. And thus did the primitive church practise after the apostles; as Justin the Martyr fully relates of it:—ὅσοι ἂν πεισθῶσι, καὶ πιστεύωσιν ἀληθῆ ταῦτα τὰ ὑφ' ἡμῶν διδασκόμενα, καὶ λεγόμενα εἶναι, καὶ ποιεῖν οὕτως δύνασθαι ὑπισχῶνται, &c.—ἄγονται ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἔνθα ὕδωρ ἐστὶ, καὶ τρόπον ἀναγεννήσεως, ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ ἀνεγεννήθημεν, ἀναγεννῶνται—*Apol.* 2. *Whoever* (saith he) *are persuaded, and do believe these things by us taught, and said to be true, and undertake that they can live so according to them;—are brought thither, where water is, and are regenerated after the same manner as we have been regenerated.* I further add, that even this faith is expressed to be the effect of divine grace and inspiration; for when St. Peter had confessed that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God*, our Saviour tells him, *that flesh and blood had not revealed that unto him, but his Father in heaven;* and, *No man* (St. Paul tells us) *can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost:* and, *Every spirit which confesseth Jesus Christ to have been come in the flesh, is of God*, saith St. John.[u] So that even this is a faith, in respect to which the Holy Ghost is called *the Spirit of faith*, which is the *fruit of the Spirit*, and *the gift of God;* that which *no man can* have without *God's drawing him*, and teaching him: *No man can come unto me, except the Father, that hath sent me, shall draw him* (ἑλκύσῃ αὐτὸν.) *Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto*

* Οἱ ἀσμένως ἀποδεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον.—Acts ii. 41.

[n] John xi. 26.

[o] Matt. xvi. 16, 17; John vi. 69.

[p] Acts viii. 12. [q] Acts viii. 37, 38.

[r] Acts xvi. 14, 15. [s] Acts xvii. 3, 4.

[t] Acts ix. 20; xvi. 32; xvii. 11, 12.

[u] Matt. xvi. 16, 17; 1 Cor. xii. 3; ii. 10; 2 Cor. iv. 6; 2 Pet. i. 19; 1 John iv. 2; (Eph. i. 17, 18.)

me:[v] to which it is ordinarily required, that God should *open the heart*, as he did Lydia's heart, *to attend and assent unto what St. Paul taught*:[w] neither doth the scripture, as I conceive, attribute any thing unto faith, which doth not agree to this notion.

We might lastly adjoin, that this was the common and current notion of faith among the ancient Christians; neither do we, I suppose, meet with any other in their writings; all which things do abundantly confirm the truth thereof.

5. But I must further observe particularly (in correspondence to what was before more generally observed), that this faith doth not only denote precisely and abstractedly such acts of mind, such opinions and persuasions concerning the truth of matters specified, but doth also connote and imply (indeed comprehend, according to the meaning of those who use the word) such acts of will, as, supposing those persuasions to be real and complete, are naturally consequent upon them, and are in a manner necessarily coherent with them; a firm resolution constantly to profess and adhere unto the doctrine of which a man is so persuaded; to obey all the laws and precepts which it contains; forsaking in open profession, and in real practices, all principles, rules, customs inconsistent with those doctrines and laws;* that which is called *conversion*, or *returning to the Lord* (that is, leaving a course of rebellion, and disobedience to those laws which the Lord in the gospel commands, and resolvedly betaking themselves to the observance of them), πολύς τε ὄχλος πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον, *a great multitude* (it is said) *believing, did return unto the Lord*; their faith did carry with it such a conversion. Hence this faith is styled πειθαρχεῖν Θεῷ, *to obey God's command*; ὑπακούειν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, *to obey the gospel*; ὑπακούειν τῇ πίστει, *to obey the faith*; ὑποταγὴ τῆς ὁμολογίας εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (*subjection of professing the gospel of Christ, which purpose of heart to adhere unto God; stipulation of a good conscience toward God*[x] (that which St. Peter intimates, as a necessary concomitant of baptism, it being a sincere undertaking, and engaging one's self to obey God's commandments;) in fine, to *repent*; which is either adequately the same thing with faith, or included therein, according to the apostolical meaning of the word; for that remission of sins, which is sometime made the consequent of faith, is otherwhere expressly annexed to repentance: the sum of the gospel our Saviour himself expresses by the preaching in his name *repentance, and remission of sins in all nations*:[y] and, *Repent* (St. Peter preached), *and let every one of you be baptized*:[z] and, *Repent* (said he again), *and return, that your sins may be blotted out*:[a] and, *Then to the Gentiles* (say those in the Acts) *hath God given repentance unto life*; which signifies the same with that other expression concerning the same person, *God's having purified their hearts by faith*;[b] in which places I take repentance to import the same thing with faith; being in effect nothing else but sincere embracing Christian religion. Now the word *faith* is thus extended (beyond its natural and primary force) to comprehend such a compliance of will, or purpose of obedience, because this doth naturally arise from a persuasion concerning the truth of the gospel, if it be real and strong enough, in that degree which Christianity requires, and supposes to the effects mentioned in the gospel; if it be ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, *in the heart*[c] (or a hearty faith), as St. Paul speaks; if it be such as Philip exacts of the Eunuch, *a belief* ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας, *from the whole heart*; if it have that due plerophory, that stability, that solidity, which the apostles speak of; for a weak, faint, slight, ill-grounded, ill-rooted opinion concerning the truth of the gospel (such as those in another case had, whom our Saviour re-

* *Salv. de Provid.* iv. 1.—Cum hoc sit hominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christi mandata servare, fit absque dubio, ut nec fidem habeat qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata conculcat, &c.

[v] 2 Cor. iv. 13; Gal. v. 22; Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 29; John vi. 44, 45. [w] Acts xvi. 14.

[x] Acts xi. 21; *Vide* Acts ix. 35; xiv. 15; xxvi. 18; v. 32; 1 Thess. i. 8; Rom. i. 6; vi. 17; xvi. 16; 2 Cor. ix. 13; Acts xi. 23; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[y] Luke xxiv. 47.

[z] Acts ii. 38; iii. 19; xvii. 30.

[a] Acts xi. 18. [b] Acts xv. 9.

[c] Rom. x. 6.

buked with a τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι;[d] *why are ye fearful, O ye small in faith?* such as St. Peter had, when our Saviour said to him, ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?*[e] which faith could not keep them nor him from sinking; not such as those had, who *heard the word, and gladly received it; but wanted root, so that, when persecution or affliction did arise for the word, they were presently scandalized;*[f] not such a faith as those many rulers had, who are said to have *believed in Jesus, but for fear of the Pharisees did not confess him;*[g] not such as Simon Magus had, who is said to have believed Philip, but to no good effect, *because his heart was not right before God;* he having not thoroughly resolved to obey the gospel; not such as Agrippa had, whom St. Paul had *almost persuaded to be a Christian*[h])—these sorts of faith are, in comparison to that we speak of, but equivocally so called: it includes a firm resolution to perform carefully all the duties enjoined to Christians, to undergo patiently all the crosses incident to Christianity; it is the same with becoming a disciple of Christ, which a man cannot be without renouncing all other interests and concernments, without *denying one's self, forsaking all and following him;* without *taking his yoke upon him, going after, and bearing his cross;*[i] it supposes (as our Saviour also teaches us) that a man hath cast up with himself the gain and loss he is like to receive by the bargain, and being satisfied therein, to contract *bona fide* with God; that a man hath weighed all the pains and dangers he shall be put upon by entering into this warfare, and so resolvedly to adventure upon it: it is productive of *love to the truth*, yea of love to God, and charity to men, without which all faith is unprofitable and ineffectual, as St. Paul teaches us.[j] In short, this faith is nothing else but a true, serious, resolute embracing Christianity; not only being persuaded that all the doctrines of Christ are true, but submitting to his will and command in all things.*

But to prevent mistakes, and remove objections, I shall yet further observe,

6. That this faith hath, although not an adequate, yet a peculiar respect unto that part of Christian truth which concerns the merciful intentions of God toward mankind, and the gracious performances of our Saviour in order to the accomplishing them; the promises of pardon to our sins, and restoral into God's favour upon the terms propounded in the gospel, of sincere faith and repentance; whence the gospel is called λόγος καταλλαγῆς (*the word of reconciliation;*[k]) and this is expressed as a summary of the apostolic ministry or message; that *God was in Christ reconciling the world, not imputing their sins:*[l] and this our Saviour did order in especial manner to be preached in his name; this accordingly they did mainly propound and inculcate; that God had *exalted Jesus to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins; that he should receive remission of sins, whoever did believe in his name: Let it be known unto you, brethren, that by this man remission of sins is denounced unto you*[m] (so did they preach.) Whence this faith is (*signanter*) called *belief in the blood of Christ:* indeed, of all Christian doctrines, this is most proper first to be propounded and persuaded, as the most attractive to the belief of the rest; most encouraging and comfortable to men; most apt to procure glory to God by the illustration of his principal attributes, his justice and his goodness;[n] most suitable to the state of things between God and man; for men being in a state of rebellion and enmity toward God, in order to their reducement and recovery thence, it was most proper, that in the first place an overture of mercy and pardon should be made, an act of oblivion should be passed and propounded to them: yet are not these propositions and promises the adequate or entire object of

[d] Acts viii. 37; Heb. x. 22, 23; vi. 11, 12; 1 Thess. i. 5; Col. i. 23; ii. 5, 7; iv. 12; 2 Cor. viii. 7.

[e] Matt. viii. 26; xiv. 31.

[f] Matt. xiii. 20. [g] John xii. 42.

[h] Acts viii 12. 21; xxvi. 28.

[i] Matt. x. 38; xi. 29; Luke ix. 23; xiv. 26, 27; xvi. 24; Matt. xiii. 44, 45; Luke xiv. 28, 31.

[j] 2 Thess. ii. 10; (1 Cor. xiii. 2; Gal. v. 6.)

* Credere se in Christum quomodo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus facere præcepit? *Cypr. de Un. Ec.*

[k] 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. [l] Luke xxiv. 47.

[m] Acts v. 31; x. 43; xiii. 38; Rom. iii. 25.

[n] Rom. iii. 26; xv. 9; Eph. i. 6.

this faith; for other articles of faith are often propounded in a collateral order with those; yea sometimes (as in the case of the Eunuch) others are expressed, when that is not mentioned, but only understood:[o] neither if any one should believe all the doctrines of that kind, if he did not withal believe that Jesus is his Lord, and shall be his Judge; that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and a judgment to come, with the like fundamental verities of our religion, would he be a believer in this sense.

7. I observe further, that this faith doth relate only to propositions revealed by God* (or at least deduced from principles of reason, such as are, that there is a God; that God is good, veracious, and faithful; that our religion is true in the gross; that the holy scriptures were written by divine inspiration; which propositions we believe upon rational grounds and motives), not unto other propositions concerning particular matter of fact, subject to private conscience or experience; nor to any conclusions depending upon such propositions. For instance, it is a part of this faith to believe that God is merciful and gracious, that he bears good-will unto, and is disposed to pardon, every penitent sinner; or (which is all one) that supposing a man doth believe, and hath repented, God doth actually love him, and doth forgive his sins: this is, I say, indeed a part of the faith we speak of, its object being part of the gospel revealed unto us: but the being persuaded that God doth love me, or hath pardoned my sins, or that I am in a state of favour with God, may, as my circumstances may be, not be my duty; however, it is no part of this faith, but a matter of opinion, dependent upon private experience: for such a persuasion must be grounded upon my being conscious to myself of having truly and thoroughly repented (this being required by God as a necessary condition toward my obtaining pardon, and his favour;) of having performed which duty I may presume, when it is false (and therefore cannot then be obliged to believe it), and may doubt when it is true; and that not without good reason, considering the blindness and fallibility of man's mind, and that man's *heart is deceitful above all things*,[p] as the prophet tells us: upon which account, then, a man may not be obliged to have such a persuasion. It is indeed a great fault to doubt, or distrust, on that hand which concerns God; about his goodness, his truth, his wisdom, or power: but it is not always (perhaps not commonly) blameable to question a man's own qualifications, or his own performances, whether in kind or degree they be answerable to what God requires;* *that* is inconsistent with true faith, but *this* not: we cannot have any good religious affections toward God, if we do not take him to be our gracious Father; but we may have in us such affections toward him, and he may be favourably disposed toward us, when we suspect ourselves to be untoward children, *unworthy* (as the prodigal son in the gospel confessed himself) *to be called the sons of God.*[q] The centurion in the gospel did confess himself *unworthy that Christ should enter under his roof:* but he declared his persuasion, that *if Christ should only speak a word, his child should be healed;* and our Saviour thereupon professes, *that he had not found so much faith in Israel.*[r] To the blind men imploring his relief, our Saviour puts the question, *Do ye believe that I can do this? They answered, Yes, Lord:* he required no more of them; but said thereupon, *According to your faith let it be done unto you.*[s] And that for which Abraham the father of believers, his faith is represented so acceptable is, his firm persuasion concerning God's power; *because* (saith St. Paul) *he had a plerophory, that what was promised, God was able to perform;* by doing thus, he was a believer, and thereby *gave glory to God*, as the apostle there adds.[t] If we do not then distrust God, we may have faith, although we distrust ourselves. It

* Fides dicit, parata sunt magna et incomprehensibilia dona a Deo fidelibus suis: dicit spes, mihi illa bona sevantur; charitas dicit, curro ego ad illa.—*Bern.*

[o] Acts viii 37; Rom. x. 9.

* Qui perseveraverit usque ad finem, hic salvus erit; quicquid ante finem fuerit, gradus est, quo ad fastigium salutis ascenditur, non terminus, quo jam culminis summa teneatur, &c.—*Cypr. de Unit. Eccl.* p. 259.

[p] Jer. xvii. 9.

[q] Luke xv. 19.

[r] Matt. viii. 8, 10.

[s] Matt. ix. 28, 29; *vide* Matt. xv. 27.

[t] Rom. iv. 21, 11; Heb. xi. 19; Rom. iv. 21

is true (generally and absolutely speaking) we should endeavour so fully and clearly to repent, and to perform whatever God requires of us, that we may thence acquire a good hope concerning our state; we should labour, that *our hearts may not condemn us* of any presumptuous transgressing our duty, and consequently, that we may become in a manner confident of God's favour towards us:[u] but when we have done the best we can, even when we are not conscious of any enormous fault or defect, yet we may consider with St. Paul, *that we are not thereby justified*,[v] but abide liable to the more certain cognizance and judgment of God, *who seeth not as man seeth;*[w] that we are not capable, or competent judges of ourselves; nor are ever the better for thinking well of ourselves; since, as St. Paul tells us again, *he is not approved that commends himself, but whom the Lord commendeth:* for that, *delicta sua quis intelligit? who can thoroughly understand and scan his own errors? Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am purged of my sin?*[x] Who can know (if the Psalmist implieth that he could not), until God hath searched him, and discovers it, *whether there be any secret way of wickedness in him;*[y] whether he be sufficiently grieved for having offended God, fully humbled under the sense of his sins, thoroughly resolved to amend his life? However, it often happens that true faith and sincere repentance are in degree very defective; in which case we may, without prejudicing the truth of our faith, suspect the worst;* yea, I conceive it is more safe and commendable so to do:† if in any, then chiefly, I suppose, in this most important and critical affair, the Wise Man's sentence doth hold, *Blessed is he that feareth always;*[z] so feareth, as thereby to become more solicitous and watchful over his heart and ways; more careful and studious of securing his salvation finally, to render his calling and election in the event more firm, and in his apprehension more hopeful. I dare say, of two persons otherwise alike qualified,* he that upon this ground (fearing his own unworthiness, or the defect of his performances) is most doubtful of his state, doth stand really upon better terms with God; as the Pharisee, who *justified himself*, and took himself to be in a very good condition, was indeed *less justified*[a] (somewhat the less for that conceit of his) than the poor Publican who was sensible of his own unworthiness, and condemned himself in his own opinion: the great danger lies on that hand of being presumptuous, arrogant, and self-conceited, which God hates; and on this hand there usually lies humility, modesty, and poverty of spirit, which God loves. As *every high thing* (every elevation of mind) *is abominable in God's sight*, and he *depresseth him that exalteth himself;* so lowly thoughts are gracious in God's regard; *he raiseth him that humbleth himself and is lowly in his own eyes:* he hath an especial respect to him *that is of a poor and contrite heart, and trembleth at his word.*[b] It is a property of good men (being such as often reflect upon their own hearts and ways, and thence discern the defects in them), with Jacob, to think themselves *less than the least of God's mercies;* with David, to be *afraid of God's judgments;* it is their duty to pass the time of *their sojourning here in fear, to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.*[c] I may add, that sometime a person much loving God, and much beloved of him, may be like *a pelican of the wilderness, and an owl of the desert;*[d] from an apprehension of God's anger, may have *no soundness in his flesh, nor rest in his bones, by reason of his sin;* may have his *spirit overwhelmed, and his heart within him desolate;*[e] may fear that his sins have *separated between him and his God;* and that he is *forsaken of God; God hiding his*

* Μὴ ὑψηλοφρόνει, ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ,—Rom. xi. 20.

† Nunquam est de salute propria mens secura sapientis.—*Salv. ad Eccl. Cath.* lib. ii.

[u] Col. i. 23; Heb. iii. 6; 1 John iii. 21.

[v] 1 Cor. iv. 4. [w] 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

[x] 2 Cor. x. 18; Psal. xix. 12; Prov. xx. 9.

[y] Psal. cxxxix. 24.

[z] Prov. xxviii. 14; 2 Pet. i. 10.

* Quem censeas digniorem, nisi emendatiorem; quem emendatiorem, nisi timidiorem?—*Tertull. de Pœnit.* 6.

[a] Luke xviii. 14; x. 29.

[b] Luke xvi. 15; xviii. 14; 2 Sam. xxii. 28; Psal. xxxiv. 18; Isa. lxvi. 2; lvii. 15.

[c] Gen. xxxii. 10; Psal. cxix. 120; Phil. ii. 12; 1 Pet. i. 17; 2 Pet. i. 10.

[d] Psal. cii. 6.

[e] Psal. xxxviii. 3; cxliii. 4.

face, and withdrawing the light of his countenance, he may be *troubled*, may have *his soul cast down, and disquieted within him;* may be ready to say, *I am cut off from before thine eyes:*[f] even such a man, in such a state of distress and doubt may continue a believer; he retaining honourable thoughts of God (in which the worth and virtue of true faith consisteth), although dejected by the conscience of his own infirmities, by suspicion of his own indispositions, and consequently by the fear of God's displeasure.

Further, that this faith doth not essentially include a respect to such particular propositions, or does not (as many in these two latter ages have deemed and taught) consist in our being persuaded that our sins are pardoned, or our persons just in God's esteem;* that we are acceptable to God, and stand possessed of his favour, appears from hence, that faith is in holy scripture represented in nature precedaneous to God's benevolence (especial I mean, not general benevolence, for that prevents all acts and dispositions of us, or in us), to his conferring remission of sins, accepting and justifying our persons; it is a previous condition, without which (as the apostle teaches us) *it is impossible to please God;* it is a reason of God's love (*The Father*, saith our Lord, *loves you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came from God;*[g]) it is a ground of divine acceptation and good-will (*Abraham believed God*, saith St. James, *and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God;*[h] it is a mean, or instrument (so it is constantly represented), by which we are justified, obtain God's favour, and the remission of our sins; and therefore is in order of nature previous and prerequisite thereto; it is therefore required before baptism, in which remission of sins is consigned: God justifies, accepts, and pardons him that hath been impious, but not him that is an infidel. This is the method plainly declared in scripture; wherefore, if faith implies a persuasion that God hath remitted our sins, it must imply an antecedent faith (even a justifying faith, antecedent to itself), or that we believe before we believe, and are justified before we are justified. I add, that by this notion many, or most (I will not, after the council of Trent, say all) humble and modest Christians are excluded from being believers; even all those who are not confident of their own sincerity and sanctity, and consequently cannot be assured of their standing in God's favour: and on the other side, the most presumptuous and fanatical sort of people are most certainly the truest and strongest believers, as most partaking of the most essential property thereof, according to that notion; for of all men living, such are wont to be most assured of God's especial love unto them, and confident that their sins are pardoned: experience sufficiently shows this to be true, and consequently that such a notion of faith cannot be good.

Much less is that notion of faith right, which defines faith to be a firm and certain knowledge of God's eternal goodwill toward us particularly, and that we shall be saved;* which notion (taught in the beginning of the Reformation, by a man of greatest name and authority) was thus lately expressed by the professors of Leyden in their *Synopsis purioris Theologiæ: Faith* (they say in their definition thereof) *is a firm assent—by which every believer, with a certain trust resting in God, is persuaded not only that remission of sins is in general promised to them who believe, but is granted to himself particularly, and eternal righteousness, and from it life, by the mercy of God*, &c.† Which notion seems to

* Se fide hoc beneficium accipiendum est, qua credere nos oportet, quod propter Christum nobis donentur remissio peccatorum et justificatio.—*Conf. Aug.*——Quum justificamur fide, vult te intueri filium Dei sedentem ad dextram Patris, Mediatorem, interpellantem pro nobis, et statuere, quod tibi remittantur peccata; quod justus, id est acceptus reputeris.—*Melanct. Loc. Com.* p 418.

[f] Jer. v. 25; Psal. xxii. 1; xxx. 7; lxxxix. 46; xlii. 5; lxix. 16; xxxi. 22.

[g] Heb. xi. 6; John xvi. 27.

[h] James ii. 23.

* *Calv. Inst.* lib. vii. § 7, et 28. compar.—Nunc justa fidei definitio nobis constabit, si dicamus esse divinæ erga nos benevolentiæ firmam certamque cognitionem, &c.——Jam in divina benevolentia quam respicere dicitur fides, intelligimus salutis ac vitæ æternæ possessionem obtineri, &c.

† —— firmus assensus—quo certa fiducia in Deo acquiescens firmiter unusquisque fidelis statuit, non solum promissum esse credentibus in genere remissionem peccatorum, sed sibi in

be very uncomfortable, as rejecting every man from the company of believers, who is either ignorant or doubtful, not only concerning his present, but his final state; who hath not, not only a good opinion, but a certain knowledge, of his present sincerity and sanctity; yea, not only of this, but of his future constant perseverance therein: so that if a man be not sure he hath repented, he is (according to this notion) sure that he hath not repented, and is no believer. How many good people must this doctrine discourage and perplex! To remove it, we may consider, 1. That it altogether inverts and confounds the order of things declared in scripture, wherein faith (as we observed before) is set before obtaining God's good will, as a prerequisite condition thereto; and is made a means of salvation (*without faith it is impossible to please God: By grace we are saved, through faith.*[i]) And if we must believe before God loves us (with such a love as we speak of), and before we can be saved; then must we know that we believe, before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved; and consequently we must indeed believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved. But this doctrine makes the knowledge of God's love and of salvation in nature antecedent to faith, as being an essential ingredient into it; which is preposterous. Consider this circle of discourse: a man cannot know that he believes, without he does believe; this is certain: a man cannot know that he shall be saved, without knowing he doth believe; this is also certain: for upon what ground, from what evidence, can he know his salvation, but by knowing his faith? But again backward: a man, say they, cannot believe (and consequently not know that he believes) without being assured of his salvation. What an inextricable maze and confusion is here! This doctrine indeed doth make the knowledge of a future event to be the cause of its being future; it supposes God to become our friend (as Abraham was by his faith) by our knowing that he is our friend;[j] it makes us to obtain a reward by knowing that we shall obtain it; it supposes the assurance of our coming to a journey's end, to be the way of getting thither; which who can conceive intelligible, or true? Our Saviour doth indeed tell us, that it is *the way to life* everlasting (or conducible to the attaining it), *to know* (that is, to believe, as it is interpreted in the 8th verse of that chapter;[k] for what upon good grounds we are persuaded of, or judge true, we may be said to know) *the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent:* but he doth not say, it is life everlasting (or conducible to the obtaining it) to know, that we shall have life everlasting; that were somewhat strange to say. St. Peter exhorts us to *use diligence to make our calling and election sure*[l] (or firm, and stable:) but he doth not bid us know it to be sure. If we did know it to be so, what need should we have to make it so? yea, how could we make it so? He doth not enjoin us to be sure of it in our opinion, but to secure it in the event by sincere obedience, and a holy life; by so impressing this persuasion upon our minds, so rooting the love of God and his truth in our hearts, that no temptation may be able to subvert our faith, or to pluck out our charity.

2. This notion plainly supposes the truth of that doctrine, that no man being once in God's favour, can ever quite lose it; the truth of which I shall not contest now (nor allege the many clear passages of scripture, nor the whole tenor of the gospel, nor the unanimous consent of all Christendom for fifteen hundred years, against it), but shall only take notice, that their notion of faith necessarily presupposing the truth of this doctrine, is yet thereby everted: for it follows thence, that no man, who doth not assent to that doctrine, is, or can be a believer: for he that is not assured of the truth of that opinion (although we suppose him assured of his present sincerity, and being in a state of grace) cannot know that he shall be saved: so that only such as agree with them in that opinion can be believers, which is somewhat hard, or rather very absurd. And

particulari concessum, æternamque justitiam, et ex ea vitam, &c.

[i] Heb. xi. 6; Eph. ii. 8; Rom. x. 9.

[j] James ii. 23.

[k] John xvii. 3, 8.

[l] 2 Pet. i. 10.

to aggravate this inconvenience, I adjoin, 3. That, according to their notion, scarce any man (except some have had an especial revelation concerning their salvation), before the late alterations in Christendom, was a believer; for before that time it hardly appears that any man did believe, as they do, that a man cannot fall from grace; and therefore scarce any man could be assured that he should be saved; and therefore scarce any man could be a believer in their sense.

St. Augustine himself (whose supposed patronage stands them in so much stead upon other occasions) hath often affirmed, that divers have had given them that faith, that charity, that justification, wherein if they had died, they should have been saved; who yet were not saved:* which persons surely, when they were in that good state (admitting them, according to St. Augustine's supposal, to have been in it), were as capable of knowing their salvation, as any other man can be; yea, St. Augustine himself (considering that *accidere cuiquam quod potest, cuivis potest*, what was another man's case might be his, there being no ground of difference) could not be more sure of his own salvation at any time, than such persons were at that time: according to St. Augustine's judgment, therefore, no man could know that he should be saved (his salvation depending upon perseverance, which in his opinion not being given to all, must as to our knowledge, whatever it might be in respect to God's decree, be contingent and uncertain)—it follows, I say, upon his suppositions, yea he expressly affirms it; lib. ii. de bono. Pers. *Itaque* (says he) *utram quisque hoc* (*perseverantiæ*) *munus acceperit, quamdiu hanc vitam ducit, incertum est. Whether any have received this gift of perseverance while he leads this life, is uncertain.* Wherefore St. Augustine could not be assured of his own salvation;† and therefore (according to these men's sense) he was no believer, no Christian; which I suppose yet they will not assert, though it be so plainly consequent on their own position. I might, 4. ask of them, if a man should confess ingenuously, that although he did hope for mercy from God in that day, yet that he was not assured of his salvation, whether such a person should be rejected from Christian communion, as no believer. It seems, according to their notion of faith, he should; since by his own (in his particular infallible) judgment, it is notorious that he, as being no believer, hath no title unto, or interest in, the privileges of Christianity: but this proceeding would very much depopulate the church, and banish from it, I fear, the best (the most humble and modest, yea, the wisest and soberest) members thereof.

But so much I think suffices for the removal of that new harsh notion, to say no worse of it.

There is another more new than that, devised by some (who perceived the inconveniences of the former notions, yet, it seems, did affect to substitute some new fine one in their room), which if it be not so plainly false, yet is, it seems, more obscure and intricate.* It is this: that faith is not an assent to propositions of any kind, but a recumbency, leaning, resting, rolling upon, adherency to (for they express themselves in these several terms, and others like them) the person of Christ; or, an apprehending and applying to ourselves the righteousness of Christ; his person itself, and his righteousness, as simple incomplex things, not any proposition—(that they expressly caution against)—are the objects, say they of our faith: they compare our faith to a hand that lays hold upon Christ, and applies his righteousness; and to an eye that looks upon him, and makes him present to us; and by looking on him (as on the brazen serpent) cures us. But this notion is so intricate, these phrases are so unintelligible, that I scarce believe the devisers of them did themselves know what they meant by them; I do not, I am sure: for what it is for one body to lean upon, or to be rolled on another; what for one body to reach at, and lay hold

* De Corr. et Gr. cap, 9, et 13; De bon. Persev. cap. viii. 13.

† —— nec sibi quisque ita notus est, ut sit de sua crastina conversatione securus.—*Aug. Ep.* 121, *ad Probam.*——In hoc mundo, et in hac vita nulla anima possit esse secura.—*Ibid.* —— Quamdiu vivimus, in certamine sumus, et quamdiu in certamine, nulla certa est victoria.—*Hier. adv. Pelag.* ii. 2.

* *Vide* Ames. Med. lib. i. cap. 27, Christus adæquatum objectum.—*Ames.*

upon another; what it is to apply a garment to one's body, or a salve to one's wounds, I can easily understand: but what it is for a man's mind to lean upon a person (otherwise than by assenting unto some proposition he speaks, or relying upon some promise he makes), to apply a thing, otherwise than by consenting to some proposition concerning that thing, I cannot apprehend, or reach; there is not, as we noted before, any faculty or operation of a man's mind, which answers the intent of such notions or phrases. Let me put this case: Suppose a great province had generally revolted from its sovereign, whereby the people thereof had all deserved extreme punishment suitable to such an offence; but that the king, moved with pity, and upon the intercession of his only beloved son (together with a satisfaction offered and performed by him), should resolve to grant a general pardon to them, upon just, and fit, and withal very easy terms; and that, for the execution of this gracious purpose toward them, he should depute and send his son himself among them to treat with them, by him declaring his merciful intentions toward them, with the conditions, upon compliance, wherewith, all, or any of them, should be pardoned their offence, and received into favour; those conditions being, suppose it, that first they should receive and acknowledge his son for such as he professed himself to be (the king's son indeed, who truly brought such a message unto them from his majesty;) then, that they should seriously resolve with themselves, and solemnly engage to return unto their due allegiance; undertaking faithfully for ever after to observe those laws which the said prince in his father's name should propound unto them. Suppose further, that the prince, in pursuance of this commission and design, being come into the country, should there send all about officers of his, enjoining them to discover the intent of his coming, what he offered, and upon what terms; withal, empowering them in his name to receive those who complied, into favour, declaring them pardoned of all their offences, and restored to the benefit of the king's protection, and all the privileges of loyal subjects: suppose now, that these officers should go to the people, and speak to them in this manner: The king makes an overture of pardon and favour unto you, upon condition that any one of you will recumb, rest, lean upon, or roll himself upon the person of his son (rest upon his person, not only rely upon his word, that you are to understand), or in case you will lay hold upon and apply to yourselves his son's righteousness, by which he hath procured of the king his father this mercy and favour for you (not only being persuaded that he hath performed thus much for you, this is not enough:) do you think these messengers should thus well express themselves, or perform their message handsomely and with advantage? Should not they do much better, laying aside such words of metaphor and mystery, to speak in plain language; telling them, that their king's son (by plain characters discernible to be truly such) was come among them upon such an intention; that if they would acknowledge him, and undertake thereafter to obey him, they should receive a full pardon, with divers other great favour's and advantages thereby? The case is apparently so like to that which stands between God and man, and doth so fully resemble the nature of the evangelical dispensation, that I need not make any application, or use any more argument to refute that notion: I shall only say, that I conceive these new phrases, for such they are, not known to ancient Christians, nor delivered, either in terms or sense, in scripture; for the places alleged in favour or proof of them by Ames, one of the first broachers of them (all, we may presume, that they could find anywise seeming to favour their notion), do not, as, if time would permit, might easily be showed, import any such thing, but are strangely misapplied—that, I say, these phrases do much obscure the nature of this great duty, and make the state of things in the gospel more difficult and dark than it truly is; and thereby seem to be of bad consequence, being apt to beget in people both dangerous presumptions and sad perplexities: for they hearing that they are only, or mainly, bound to have such a recumbency upon Christ, or to make such an application of his righteousness, they begin (accordingly as they take themselves to be directed) to work their minds to it; and when they have hit

upon that posture of fancy which they guess to suit their teacher's meaning, then they become satisfied, and conceit they believe well, although perhaps they be ignorant of the principles of the Christian faith, and indisposed to obey the precepts of our Lord. Sometimes, on the other side, although they well understand, and are persuaded concerning the truth of all necessary Christian doctrines, and are well disposed to observe God's commandments, yet because they cannot tell whether they apprehend Christ's person dexterously, or apply to themselves his righteousness in the right manner, as is prescribed to them (of which it is no wonder that they should doubt, since it is so hard to know what the doing so means), they become disturbed and perplexed in their minds; questioning whether they do believe or no. Thus by these notions (or phrases rather) are some men tempted fondly to presume, and other good people are wofully discouraged by them; both being thence diverted, or withdrawn from their duty: whereas, what it is to believe, as Christians anciently did understand it, and as we have assayed to explain it, is very easy to conceive; and the taking it so, can have no other than very good influence upon practice, as both reason (as we have insinuated) shows, and the scripture largely and plainly affirms. But let thus much suffice for the inquiry concerning the genuine nature and notion of faith proper to this place (that faith by which in this text we are said to be justified:) the other particulars I cannot so much as touch upon at this time.

I end with those good prayers of our church:—

*O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good; and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ.** Amen.

Almighty and everlasting Lord, give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord.† Amen.

* 5th Sunday after Esther.
† 14th Sunday after Trinity.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON V.

OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

Rom. v. 1.—*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In order to the understanding of these words, I did formerly propound divers particulars to be considered and discussed: the first was, What that faith is, by which Christians are said to be justified? This I have despatched: the next is, What justification doth import? The which I shall now endeavour to explain, and I am concerned to perform it with the more care and diligence, because the right notion of this term hath in latter times been canvassed with so much vehemence of dissension and strife.

In former times, among the fathers and the schoolmen, there doth not appear to have been any difference or debate about it; because, as it seems, men commonly having the same apprehensions about the matters to which the word is applicable, did not so much examine or regard the strict propriety of expression concerning them:* consenting in *things*, they did not fall to cavil and contend about the exact meaning of *words*. They did indeed consider distinctly no such point of doctrine as that of *justification*, looking upon that word as used incidentally in some places of scripture, for expression of points more clearly expressed in other terms; wherefore they do not make much of the *word*, as some *divines* now do.

But in the beginning of the Reformation, when the discovery of some great errors (from the corruption and ignorance of former times) crept into vogue, rendered all things the subjects of contention, and multiplied controversies, there did arise hot disputes about this point;† and the right stating thereof seemed a matter of great importance; nor scarce was any controversy prosecuted with greater zeal

* Περὶ λεξειδίων μικρολογεῖν.—Naz.
† Articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiæ.—*Luth.*

and earnestness: whereas yet (so far as I can discern) about the real points of doctrine, whereto this word, according to any sense pretended, may relate, there hardly doth appear any material difference; and all the questions depending, chiefly seem to consist about the manner of expressing things which all agree in; or about the extent of the signification of words capable of larger or stricter acceptation: whence the debates about this point, among all sober and intelligent persons, might, as I conceive, easily be resolved or appeased, if men had a mind to agree, and did not love to wrangle; if at least a consent in believing the same things, although under some difference of expression, would content them, so as to forbear strife.

To make good which observation, tending as well to the illustration of the whole matter, as to the stating and decision of the controversies about it, let us consider the several divine acts, to which the term Justification is, according to any sense pretended, applicable: I say divine acts; for that the justification we treat of is an act of God, simple or compound (in some manner), respecting, or terminated upon man, is evident, and will not, I suppose, be contested; the words of St. Paul in several places so clearly declaring it; as in that, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;*[a] and in that, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*[b] Now, according to the tenor of Christian doctrine, such acts are these:—

1. God (in regard to the obedience performed to his will by his beloved Son, and to his intercession) is so reconciled to mankind, that unto every person who doth sincerely believe the gospel, and, repenting of his former bad life, doth seriously resolve thereafter to live according to it, he doth (upon the solemn obsignation of that faith, and profession of that resolution in baptism) entirely remit all past offences, accepting his person, receiving him into favour; assuming him into the state of a loyal subject, a faithful servant, a dutiful son; and bestowing on him all the benefits and privileges suitable to such a state; according to those passages: *It behoved Christ to suffer —— and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins;* and, *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins;* and, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins;*[c] and in other places innumerable.

2. As any person persisting in that sincere faith, and serious purpose of obedience, doth assuredly continue in that state of grace, and exemption from the guilt of sin; so in case that, out of human frailty, such a person doth fall into the commission of sin, God (in regard to the same performances and intercessions of his Son) doth, upon the confession and repentance of such a person, remit his sin, and retain him in, or restore him to, favour; according to those sayings of St. John: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness:* and, *if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*[d]

3. To each person sincerely embracing the gospel, and continuing in steadfast adherence thereto, God doth afford his Holy Spirit, as a principle productive of all inward sanctity and virtuous dispositions in his heart, enabling also and quickening him to discharge the conditions of faith and obedience required from him, and undertaken by him; that which is by some termed making a person just, infusion into his soul of righteousness, of grace, of virtuous habits; in the scripture style it is called *acting by the Spirit, bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost, renovation of the Holy Ghost, creation to good works, sanctification by the Spirit,*[e] &c.; which phrases denote partly the collation of a principle enabling to perform good works, partly the design of religion tending to that performance.

[a] Rom. viii. 33. [b] Rom. iv. 5; iii. 26.

[c] Luke xxiv. 46, 47; Acts ii. 38; iii. 19; v. 31; x. 43; 2 Cor. v. 19; Rom. iii. 24, 25.

[d] 1 John i. 9; ii. 1.

[e] Rom. viii. 14; Gal. iv. 6; 1 Cor. ii. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 7; Acts ii. 38; Rom. viii. 9; Tit. iii. 5; (Eph. ii. 22;) Eph. ii. 10; iv. 23.

Now all these acts (as by the general consent of Christians, and according to the sense of the ancient catholic church, so) by all considerable parties seeming to dissent, and so earnestly disputing about the point of justification, are acknowledged and ascribed unto God: but with which of them the act of justification is solely or chiefly coincident; whether it signifieth barely some one of them, or extendeth to more of them, or comprehendeth them all (according to the constant meaning of the word in scripture), are questions coming under debate, and so eagerly prosecuted: of which questions whatever the true resolution be, it cannot methinks be of so great consequence as to cause any great anger or animosity in dissenters one toward another, seeing they all conspire in avowing the acts, whatever they be, meant by the word *justification*, although in other terms; seeing all the dispute is about the precise and adequate notion of the word *justification:* whence those questions might well be waived as unnecessary grounds of contention; and it might suffice to understand the points of doctrine which it relateth to in other terms, laying that aside as ambiguous and litigious. Yet because the understanding the rightest, or most probable notion of the word, may somewhat conduce to the interpretation of the scriptures, and to clearing the matters couched in it, somewhat also to the satisfaction of persons considerate and peaceable, I shall employ some care faithfully (without partiality to any side) to search it out, and declare it: in order whereto I shall propound some observations seeming material.

I. Whereas it were not hard to speak much, and criticise about the primitive sense of the word, and about its various acceptations both in holy scripture and other writings, I do question whether doing that would be pertinent or conducible to our purpose of understanding its right notion here: for knowing the primitive sense of words can seldom or never determine their meaning any where, they often in common use declining from it;* and the knowing variety of acceptations doth at most yield only the advantage of choosing one suitable to the subjacent matter and occasion. We are not therefore to learn the sense of this word from mere grammarians.

II. The sense of this word is not to be searched in extraneous writers; both because no matter like to that we treat upon did ever come into their use or consideration, and because they do seldom or never use the word in a sense anywise congruous to this matter: in them most commonly the word δικαιόω doth signify (as the like word ἀξιόω) to deem a thing just, equal, or fit (or simply to deem about a thing.*) Sometimes also, yet not often as I take it, being applied to an action, or cause, it importeth to make it appear lawful, or just, as when we ordinarily say, to justify what one saith or doth (whence δικαίωμα, in Aristotle, is an argument proving the justice of a cause, *firmamentum causæ;*) but in them very seldom or never it is applied to persons; and an example, I conceive, can hardly be produced wherein it is so used.

III. In the sacred writings at large, it is commonly applied to persons, and that according to various senses, some more wide and general, some more restrained and particular. It there sometime denoteth generally to exercise any judicial act upon, in regard unto, or in behalf of, a person; to do him right, or justice, in declaring the merit of his cause, or pronouncing sentence about him; in acquitting or condemning him for any cause, in obliging him to, or exempting him from, any burden; in dispensing to him any reward or punishment, indifferently: Thus Absalom said, *O that I were made a judge in the land, that every man, which hath any suit or cause, might come unto me,* והצדקתיו, *καὶ δικαιώσω αὐτὸν, and I would justify him* (that is) *I would do him right:*[f] and in the eighty-second Psalm, this charge is given to the princes, or judges: *Defend the poor and fatherless,* הצדיקו *δικαιώσατε, justify the poor and needy;*[g] that is, do right and justice to them.

But more particularly the word signifieth (and that according to the most usual and current acceptation) so to do a man right, as to pronounce sentence in

* Verba valent ut nummi.

* Ἐδικαίωσαν ἀντὶ τοῦ δίκαιον ἔκριναν.—Bals. in Syn. Chalced. Can. 1.

[f] 2 Sam. xv. 4. [g] Psal. lxxxii. 3.

his favour, as to acquit him from guilt, to excuse him from burden, to free him from punishment; whence we most often meet with the word placed in direct opposition to that of condemnation: as in that law, *If there be a controversy between men, and they come into judgment, that the judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked:*[h] and in Solomon's prayer, *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness:*[i] and in the Proverbs, *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even both are an abomination unto the Lord:*[j] and in the gospel our Saviour saith, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*[k]

In consequence upon this sense, and with a little deflection from it, to justify a person some time denoteth to approve him, or esteem him just; a mental judgment, as it were, being passed upon him: so *Wisdom* is said to be *justified*, that is, approved *by her children:* so, in the gospel, some persons are said to *justify themselves*, that is, to conceit themselves righteous:[l] and the *Publican went home justified rather than the Pharisee*, that is, more approved and accepted by God: so also it is said, *that all the people and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with John's baptism:*[m] they justified God, that is, they declared their approbation of God's proceeding, in the mission of John.

In like manner, justification is taken for exemption from burdens; as where in the Acts St. Paul saith, *And from all things, from which by the law of Moses ye could not be justified, in this is every one that believeth justified.*[n]

It may also sometimes be taken for deliverance from punishment; as where in the law God saith, *The innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the wicked;*[o] that is, not let him escape with impunity; according to that in the Proverbs, *Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished.*

IV. We may observe, that (as every man hath some phrases and particular forms of speech, in which he delighteth, so) this term is somewhat peculiar to St. Paul, and hardly by the other apostles applied to that matter which he expresseth thereby; they usually in their sermons and epistles do speak the same thing, whatever it be, in other terms more immediately expressive of the matter. St. James, indeed, doth use it, but not so much, it seemeth, according to his usual manner of speech, as occasionally, to refute the false and pestilent conceits of some persons, who mistaking St. Paul's expressions and doctrine, did pervert them to the maintenance of Solifidian, Eunomian, and Antinomian positions, greatly prejudicial to good practice.[p] And seeing the term is so proper to St. Paul in relation to this matter, the right sense and notion thereof seemeth best derivable from considering the nature of the subject he treateth on, observing the drift of his discourse and manner of his reasoning, comparing the other phrases he useth equivalent to this, and interpretative of his meaning.

V. Following this method of inquiry, I do observe and affirm, that the last notion of the word, as it is evidently most usual in the scripture, so it best suiteth to the meaning of St. Paul here, and otherwhere commonly, where he treateth upon the same matters; that God's justifying solely, or chiefly, doth import his acquitting us from guilt, condemnation, and punishment, by free pardon and remission of our sins, accounting us and dealing with us as just persons, upright and innocent in his sight and esteem: the truth of which notion I shall by divers arguments and considerations make good.

1. This sense doth best agree to the nature of the subject-matter, and to the design of St. Paul's discourse; which I take to be this: the asserting the necessity, reasonableness, sufficiency, and excellency of the Christian dispensation; in order to that, which is the end of all

[h] Deut. xxv. 1.
[i] 1 Kings viii. 32; 2 Chron. vi. 23.
[j] Prov. xvii. 15.
[k] Matt. xii. 37; (Isa. v. 23; xliii. 9.)
[l] Matt. xi. 19; Luke x. 29; xvi. 15; xviii. 14.
[m] Luke vii. 29.
[n] Acts xiii. 39.
[o] Exod. xxiii. 7.
[p] Acts xiii. 38; ii. 38; iii. 19; v. 31; x. 43 xxii. 16; Luke xxiv. 47.

religion, the bringing men to happiness, and consequently to the rendering men acceptable to God Almighty, who is the sole Author and Donor of happiness: this is that, which in general he aimeth to assert and maintain.

This, I say, is that which he chiefly driveth at, to maintain, that it is not unreasonable that God should so proceed with men (whose good and felicity, as their gracious Maker, he greatly tendereth) as the Christian gospel declareth him to do, but that rather such proceeding was necessary and fit, in order to our salvation; and withal conformable to the ordinary method of God's proceedings toward the same purpose.

Now God's proceeding with man according to the gospel, the general tenor thereof doth set out to be this: that God, out of his infinite goodness and mercy, in consideration of what his beloved Son, our blessed Lord, hath performed and suffered, in obedience to his will, and for the redemption of mankind (which by transgression of his laws, and defailance in duty toward him, had grievously offended him and fallen from his favour, was involved in guilt, and stood obnoxious to punishment), is become reconciled to them (passing by and fully pardoning all offences by them committed against him), so as generally to proffer mercy, upon certain reasonable and gentle terms, to all that shall sincerely embrace such overtures of mercy, and heartily resolve to comply with those terms required by him; namely, the returning and adhering to him, forsaking all impiety and iniquity, constantly persisting in faithful obedience to his holy commandments: this, I say, is the proceeding of God, which the Christian gospel doth especially hold forth, and which, according to our Lord's commission and command, the apostles did first preach to men;[q] as whosoever will consider the drift and tenor of their preaching will eaily discern; which, therefore, St. Paul may reasonably be supposed here to assert, and vindicate against the Jews, and other adversaries of the gospel: consequently the terms he useth should be so interpreted as to express that matter; whence being justified, will imply that which a person embracing the gospel doth immediately receive from God, in that way of grace and mercy, viz. an absolution from his former crimes, an acquittance from his debts, a state of innocence and guiltlessness in God's sight, an exemption from vengeance and punisment; all that which by him sometimes, and by the other apostles, is couched under the phrases of *remission of sins*, having sins *blotted out* and *washed away*, being *cleansed from sin;* and the like:[r] thus, considering the nature of the matter, and design of his discourse, would incline us to understand this word.

2. Again, the manner of his prosecuting his discourse, and the arguments by which he inferreth his conclusions concerning the Gospel, do confirm this notion. He discourseth and proveth at large, that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, were *shut up under sin*, that *all had sinned, and did fall short of the glory of God*[s] (that is, of rendering him his due glory by dutiful obedience), that *every mouth was stopped*, having nothing to say in defence of their transgressions, and *that all the world stood obnoxious to* the severity of *God's judgment;* that not only the light of nature was insufficient to preserve men from offending inexcusably, even according to the verdict of their own consciences, but that the written law of God had (to manifold experience) proved ineffectual to that purpose, serving rather *to work wrath*, to bring men under a curse, to aggravate their guilt, to convince them of their sinfulness, to discourage and perplex them;[t] upon which general state of men (so implicated in guilt, so liable to wrath) is consequent a necessity either of condemnation and punishment, or of mercy and pardon.

He doth also imply (that which in the Epistle to the Galatians, where he prosecuteth the same argument, is more expressly delivered) that no precedent dispensation had exhibited any manifest overture, or promise of pardon; for the light of nature doth only direct unto du-

[q] Luke xxiv. 47.

[r] Acts xiii. 38; xxii. 16; ii. 38; iii. 19; v. 31; 1 John i. 7.

[s] Rom. iii. 9; xi. 32; iii. 19, 23; Gal. iii. 22.

[t] Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iii. 21; Rom. iv. 15; iii. 20; vii. 7; Gal. ii. 16, 20; Rom. v. 20; vii. 8.

ty, condemning every man in his own judgment and conscience, who transgresseth it; but as to pardon in case of transgression, it is blind and silent; and the law of Moses rigorously exacteth punctual obedience, denouncing in express terms a condemnation and curse to the transgressors thereof in any part;[u] from whence he collecteth, that *no man can be justified by the works of the law* (*natural or Mosaical;*[v] or that no precedent dispensation can justify any man), and that *a man is justified by faith*, or hath absolute need of such a justification as that, which the gospel declareth and tendereth; λογιζόμεθα οὖν, *we hence*, saith he, *collect*, or argue, *that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law:* which justification must therefore import the receiving that free pardon, which the criminal and guilty world did stand in need of, which the forlorn and deplorable state of mankind did groan for, without which no man could have any comfort in his mind, any hope, or any capacity of salvation. If the state of man was a state of rebellion, and consequently of heinous guilt, of having forfeited God's favour, of obnoxiousness to God's wrath; then that justification, which was needful, was a dispensation of mercy, remitting that guilt, and removing those penalties.

Again, St. Paul commendeth the excellency of the evangelical dispensation from hence, that it entirely doth ascribe the justification of men to God's mercy and favour, excluding any merit of man, any right or title thereto, grounded upon what man hath performed; consequently advancing the glory of God, and depressing the vanity of man: *If* (saith he) *Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to boast; for that to him who worketh, wages are not reckoned as bestowed in favour, but are paid as debt;*[w] so it would be, if men were justified by works; they might claim to themselves the due consequences thereof, impunity and reward; they would be apt to please themselves, and boast of the effects arising from their own performances: but if, as the gospel teacheth, *men are justified freely* (*gratis*) *by God's mercy and grace,*[x] without any regard to what they formerly have done, either good or bad, those who have lived wickedly and impiously (upon their compliance with the terms proposed to them) being no less capable thereof than the most righteous and pious persons; then *where is boasting? It is excluded;*[y] then surely no man can assume any thing to himself; then all the glory and praise are due to God's frank goodness: the purport of which reasoning (so often used) doth imply, that a man's justification signifieth his being accepted or approved as just, standing *rectus in curia;* being, in God's esteem, and by his sentence, absolved from guilt and punishment; the which cannot otherwise be obtained, than from divine favour declared and exhibited in the gospel; according as St. Paul otherwhere fully speaketh: *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*[z]

Again, St. Paul expresseth justification as an act of judgment performed by God, whereby he declareth his own righteousness, or justice; that justice consisting in acceptance of a competent satisfaction offered to him in amends for the debt due to him, and in reparation of the injury done unto him, in consequence thereof acquitting the debtor, and remitting the offence; so those words declare: *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*[a] Justification there we see is expressed a result of Christ's redemption, and the act of God consequent thereon; so is remission of sins; God by them jointly demonstrating his justness and goodness, so that they may be well conceived the same thing diversely expressed, or having several names according to

[u] Rom. i. 20; ii. 15; Gal. iii. 10, 12.
[v] Rom. iii. 20.
[w] Rom. iv. 2, 4; iii. 27; Tit. iii. 5; Eph. ii. 9; Rom. xi. 6.
[x] Rom. iii. 24.
[y] Rom. iv. 5; iii. 27; Eph. ii. 9.
[z] Eph. i. 6, 7.
[a] Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

some diverse formalities of respect. So, in other places, sometimes justification, sometimes remission of sins, are reckoned the proper and immediate effects of our Saviour's passion: *Being* (saith St. Paul in the 5th to the Romans) *justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath;*[b] and, *In whom* (saith he again in the first of the Epistle to the Ephesians) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins;*[c] which argueth the equivalency of these terms.

So likewise a main point of the evangelical covenant on God's part is made justifying of a man by his faith, or upon it; and remission of sins upon the same condition, is also made the like principal point, which sometime is put alone, as implying all the benefits of that covenant.[d]

Again, justification is by St. Paul made the immediate consequent, or special adjunct, of baptism: therein he saith, we *die to sin*[e] (by resolution and engagement, to lead a new life in obedience to God's commandment), and so dying we are said to be justified from sin (that which otherwise is expressed, or expounded, by being freed from sin:[f]) now the freedom from sin obtained in baptism is frequently declared to be the remission of sin then conferred, and solemnly confirmed by a visible seal.

Whereas also so frequently we are said to be *justified by faith*, and according to the general tenor of scripture, the immediate consequent of faith is baptism; therefore dispensing the benefits consigned in baptism; is coincident with justification; and that dispensation is frequently signified to be the cleansing us from sin by entire remission thereof.[g]

3. Further, the same notion may be confirmed by comparing this term with other terms and phrases equivalent, or opposite, to this of justification.

One equivalent phrase is imputation of righteousness: *As* (saith St. Paul) *David speaketh of that man's blessedness, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin:*[h] whence, to him that considers the drift and force of St. Paul's discourse, it will clearly appear, that justification, imputing righteousness, not imputing sin, and remission of sin, are the same thing; otherwise the apostle's discourse would not signify or conclude any thing.

For confirmation of his discourse (arguing free justification by God's mercy, not for our works) St. Paul also doth allege that place in the Psalm, *For in thy sight shall no man living be justified;*[i] the sense of which place is evidently this, that no man living, his actions being strictly tried and weighed, shall appear guiltless, or deserve to be acquitted; but shall stand in need of mercy, or can no otherwise be justified than by a special act of grace.

Again, imputing faith for righteousness is the same with justifying by faith (*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness:*)[j] but that imputation is plainly nothing else but the approving him, and taking him for a righteous person in regard to his faith.

Again, justification is the same with being righteous before God, as appeareth by those words, *Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified:*[k] but being just before God plainly signifieth nothing else but being accepted by God, or approved to his esteem and judgment.

Being reconciled to God, seemeth also to be the same with being justified by him; as appeareth by those words: *Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life:*[l] where πολλῷ μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες, and πολλῷ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες, seem to signify the same; but that reconciliation is interpreted by remission of sins: *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto him-*

[b] Rom. v. 9.
[c] Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.
[d] Gal. iii. *per tot.*; Rom. ix. 27.
[e] Rom. vi. 2. [f] Rom. vi. 6, 7, 18, 22.
[g] Eph. v. 26; Tit. iii. 5; Acts xiii. 38; xxii. 16.

[h] Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8.
[i] Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16; Psal. cxliii. 2.
[j] Rom. iv. 3, 22; Gal. iii. 6.
[k] Rom. ii. 13. [l] Rom. v. 9, 10.

self, not imputing their trespasses unto them.[m]

To obtain mercy is another term signifying justification; and what doth that import but having the remission of sins in mercy bestowed on us?[n]

Again, justification is opposed directly to condemnation: *As*, saith he, *by the offence of one man* (judgment came) *upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one man* (the free gift came) *upon all men to justification of life;*[o] (*justification of life*, that is, a justification so relating to life, or bestowing a promise thereof, as the condemnation opposite thereto respected death, which it threatened.) In which place St. Paul, comparing the first Adam with his actions, and their consequences, to the second Adam with his performances, and what resulted from them, teacheth us, that as the transgression of the *first* did involve mankind in guilt, and brought consequently upon men a general sentence of death (forasmuch as all men did follow him in commission of sin;) so the obedience of the *second* did absolve all men from guilt, and restored them consequently into a state of immortality (all men, under the condition prescribed, who, as it is said, should *receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness*[p] tendered to them;) the justification, therefore, he speaketh of, doth, so import an absolution from guilt and punishment, as the condemnation signifieth a being declared guilty, and adjudged to punishment.

Bellarmine* indeed (who, in answering to this place, objected against his doctrine, blunders extremely, and is put to his trumps of sophistry) telleth us, that in this place, to maintain the parallel or *antithesis* between Adam and Christ, justification must signify infusion of grace, or putting into a man's soul an inherent righteousness; because Adam's sin did constitute us unjust with an inherent unrighteousness: but (with his favour) justification and condemnation being both of them the acts of God, and it being plain, that God condemning doth not infuse any inherent unrighteousness into man, neither doth he justifying, formally (if the *antithesis* must be pat) put any inherent righteousness into him; inherent unrighteousness in the former case may be consequent of that condemnation, and inherent righteousness may be connected with this justification; but neither *that* nor *this* may formally signify those qualities respectively: as the inherent unrighteousness consequent upon Adam's sin is not included in God's condemning, so neither is the inherent righteousness proceeding from our Saviour's obedience contained in God's justifying men.

But however, most plainly (and beyond all evasions) justification and condemnation are opposed otherwhere in this Epistle: *Who*, (saith St. Paul) *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* (or criminate against them.) *It is God who justifieth; who is he that condemneth?*[q] What can be more clear, than that there justification signifieth absolution from all guilt and blame?

4. Further, this notion may be confirmed by excluding that sense, which in opposition thereto is assigned, according to which justification is said to import, not only remission of sin, and acceptance with God, but the making a man intrinsically righteous, by infusing into him, as they speak, a habit of grace, or charity;[r] the putting into a man a *righteousness, by which* (as the council of Trent expresseth it) *we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed, but are called, and become truly righteous, receiving righteousness in ourselves.**

Now, admitting this to be true, as in a sense it surely is, that whoever (according to St. Paul's meaning in this Epistle) is justified, is also really at the same time endued with some measure of that intrinsic righteousness which those men speak of (forasmuch as that faith, which is required to justification (being a gift of God, managed by his providence, and wrought by his preventing grace), doth include a sincere and steadfast purpose of forsaking all impiety, of amendment of life, of obedience to God, which purpose *cleanseth the heart*, and is apt to produce as well inward righteousness of heart, as outward righteousness of practice; for that also to every sound believer upon his faith

* Bellarm. de Justif. ii. 3; i. 1.

[m] 2 Cor. v. 19.

[n] Rom. xi. 30, 31, 32; 1 Pet. ii. 10.

[o] Rom. v. 16, 18. [p] Rom. v. 17.

* Justitiam in nobis recipientes.

[q] Rom. viii. 33, 34. [r] Bellarmine, i. 3.

is bestowed the Spirit of God, as a principle of righteousness, dwelling in him, directing, admonishing, exciting him to do well;[s] assisting and enabling him sufficiently to the performance of those conditions, or those duties, which Christianity requireth, and the believer thereof undertaketh; which, the man's honest and diligent endeavour concurring, will surely beget the practice of all righteousness, and in continuance of such practice will render it habitual;)—avowing, I say, willingly, that such a righteousness doth ever accompany the justification St. Paul speaketh of, yet that sort of righteousness doth not seem implied by the word justification, according to St. Paul's intent, in those places where he discourseth about justification by faith; for that such a sense of the word doth not well consist with the drift and efficacy of his reasoning, nor with divers passages in his discourse. For,

1. Whereas St. Paul, from the general depravation of manners in all men, both Jews and Gentiles, argueth the necessity of such a justification as the Christian gospel declareth and exhibiteth, if we should take justification for infusing an inherent quality of righteousness into men, by the like discourse we might infer the imperfection and insufficiency of Christianity itself, and consequently the necessity of another dispensation beside it; for that even all Christians, as St. James saith,[t] do offend often, and commission of sin doth also much reign among them; so that St. Paul's discourse (justification being taken in this sense) might strongly be retorted against himself.

2. Supposing that sense of justification, a Jew might easily invalidate St. Paul's ratiocination, by saying, that even their religion did plainly enough declare such a justification, which God did bestow upon all good men in their way, as by their frequent acknowledgments and devotions is apparent; such as those of the Psalmist: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, renew a right spirit within me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; incline my heart unto thy testimonies.*[u] Which sort of prayers God hearing did infuse righteousness, and justified those persons in this sense; so that Christianity herein could not challenge any thing peculiar, or could upon this score appear so necessary as St. Paul pretendeth.

3. From the justification St. Paul speaketh of, all respects to any works, and to any qualifications in men (such as might beget in them any confidence in themselves, or yield occasion of boasting), is excluded; it cannot, therefore, well be understood for a constituting man intrinsically righteous, or infusing worthy qualities into him; but rather for an act of God terminated upon a man as altogether unworthy of God's love, as impious, as an enemy, as a pure object of mercy; so it is most natural to understand those expressions, importing the same thing: *God justifieth the ungodly; we being sinners, Christ died for us*[v] (purchasing, as the following words imply, justification for us;) *being yet enemies, we by his death were reconciled,*[w] or justified; for reconciliation and justification, as we before noted, do there signify the same.

4. Abraham is brought in as an instance of a person justified in the same manner, as Christians are according to the gospel: but his justification was merely the approving and esteeming him righteous, in regard (not to any other good works, but) to his steadfast faith, and strong persuasion concerning the power and faithfulness of God—because *he was fully persuaded, that what God had promised he was able to perform;*[x] to which faith, and justification consequent thereon, St. Paul comparing those of Christians, subjoineth: *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.*[y] As, then, it were an idle thing to fancy a righteousness, upon the score of that belief, dropt into Abraham; and as his being justified is expressly called, having righteousness, upon the account of his faith, imputed, or ascribed, to him; so our justification (like and answerable

[s] Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 16; Acts ii. 38; Eph. iv. 23 24; 2 Cor. v. 17.
[t] James iii. 2.
[u] Psal. li. 10; cxliii. 10; cxix. 35, 36.
[v] Rom. iv. 5; v. 8.
[w] Rom. v. 10.
[x] Rom. iv. 21.
[y] Rom. iv. 23, 24.

to his) should correspondently be understood, the approving and accounting us, notwithstanding our former transgressions, as righteous persons, in regard to that honest and steadfast faith, wherein we resemble *that father of the faithful.*

Even St. James himself, when he saith that Abraham and Rahab were justified by works, it is evident that he meaneth not that they had certain righteous qualities infused into them, or were made thence by God intrinsically more righteous than they were before, but that they were approved and accepted by God, because of the good works they performed (in faith and obedience to God), one of them offering to sacrifice his son, the other preserving the spies sent from God's people.

5. The so often using the word imputation of righteousness, instead of justification, doth imply this act not to be a transient operation upon the soul of man, but an act immanent to God's mind, respecting man only as its object, and translating him into another relative state: with this sense that word excellently well agreeth, otherwise it were obscure, and so apt to perplex the matter, that probably St. Paul would not have used it.

6. Again, when it is said again and again, *that faith is imputed for righteousness*, it is plain enough, that no other thing in man was required thereto: to say, that he is thereby sanctified, or hath gracious habits infused, is uncouth and arbitrarious; the obvious meaning is, that therefore he is graciously accepted and approved, as we said before.

7. We might in fine add, that the word justification is very seldom or never used in that sense of making persons righteous, or infusing righteousness into them. Bellarmine and Grotius, having searched with all possible diligence, do allege three or four places, wherein (with some plausible appearance) they pretend it must be so understood: but as they are so few, so are they not any of them thoroughly clear and certain: but are capable to be otherwise interpreted without much straining; the clearest place, Dan. xii. 3, the LXX. read מצדקים, ἀπὸ δικαίων, which the Hebrew and sense will bear. Wherefore, the other sense, which we have maintained, being undeniably common and current in the scripture, and having so many particular reasons showing it agreeable to St. Paul's intent, seemeth rather to be embraced.

In St. Paul's Epistle I can only find three or four places, wherein the word *justifying* may with any fair probability be so extended as to signify an internal operation of God upon the soul of men; they are these:—

And such were some of you; but ye have been washed, but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;[z] where justification being performed by the Spirit of God, seemeth to imply a spiritual operation upon a man's soul, as an ingredient thereof.

According to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he poured on us richly by Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we may be made heirs according to the hope of everlasting life:[a] where God's justifying us by the grace of Christ seemeth to include the renewing by the Holy Ghost.

He that dieth is justified from sin:[b] Where St. Paul speaking about our obligation to lead a new life in holy obedience, upon account of our being dedicated to Christ, and renouncing sin in baptism, may be interpreted to mean a being really in our hearts purified and freed from sin.

Whom he predestinated, those he called; and whom he called, those he justified; and whom he justified, those he glorified:[c] where the chief acts of God toward those who finally shall be saved, being in order purposely recited, and justification being immediately (without interposing sanctification) coupled to glorification, the word may seem to comprise sanctification.

If considering these places (which yet are not clearly prejudicial to the notion we have made good, but may well be interpreted so as to agree thereto) it shall seem to any, that St. Paul doth not ever so strictly adhere to that notion, as not sometime to extend the word to a larger sense, I shall not much contend about it: it is an ordinary thing for all writers to use their words sometimes in a larger,

[z] 1 Cor. vi. 11.
[a] Tit. iii. 5, 6, 7.
[b] Rom. vi. 7.
[c] Rom. viii. 30.

sometimes in a stricter sense; and it sufficeth to have shown, that where St. Paul purposely treateth about the matter we discourse upon, the purport of his discourse argueth, that he useth it according to that notion which we have proposed.

8. I shall only add one small observation, or conjecture, favouring this notion; which is the probable occasion of all St. Paul's discourse and disputation about this point, which seemeth to have been this: That Christianity should (upon so slender a condition or performance as that of faith) tender unto all persons indifferently, however culpable or flagitious their former lives had been, a plenary remission of sins and reception into God's favour, did seem an unreasonable and implausible thing to many:* the Jews could not well conceive, or relish, that any man so easily should be translated into a state equal or superior to that which they took themselves peculiarly to enjoy: the Gentiles themselves (especially such as conceited well of their own wisdom and virtue) could hardly digest it: Celsus in Origen could not imagine or admit, that bare faith† should work such a miricle as presently to turn a dissolute person into a saint, beloved of God, and designed to happiness.

Zozimus saith of Constantine, that he chose Christianity as the only religion that promised impunity and pardon for his enormous practices; intimating his dislike of that point in our religion. This prejudice against the gospel St. Paul removeth, by showing, that because of all men's guilt and sinfulness, such an exhibition of mercy, such an overture of acceptance, such a remission of sin, was necessary in order to salvation, so that without it no man could be exempted from wrath and misery; and that consequently all other religions (as not exhibiting such a remission) were to be deemed in a main point defective: when therefore he useth the word justification to express this matter, it is reasonable to suppose, that he intendeth thereby to signify that remission, or dispensation of mercy.

It may be objected, that St. Austin and some others of the Fathers do use the word commonly according to the sense of the Tridentine council. I answer, that the point having never been discussed, and they never having thoroughly considered the sense of St. Paul, might unawares take the word as it sounded in Latin, especially the sense they affixed to it, signifying a matter very true and certain in Christianity. The like hath happened to other Fathers in other cases; and might happen to them in this, not to speak accurately in points that never had been sifted by disputation. More, I think, we need not say in answer to their authority.

VI. So much may suffice for a general explication of the notion; but for a more full clearing of the point, it may be requisite to resolve a question concerning the time when this act is performed or dispensed. It may be inquired when God justifieth, whether once, or at several times, or continually. To which question I answer briefly—

1. That the justification which St. Paul discourseth of, seemeth, in his meaning, only or especially to be that act of grace which is dispensed to persons at their baptism, or at their entrance into the church; when they openly professing their faith, and undertaking the practice of Christian duty, God most solemnly and formally doth absolve them from all guilt, and accepteth them into a state of favour with him: that St. Paul only or chiefly respecteth this act, considering his design, I am inclined to think, and many passages in his discourse seem to imply.

If his design were (as I conceive it probable) to vindicate the proceeding of God, peculiarly declared in the gospel, in receiving the most notorious and heinous transgressors to grace in baptism, then especially must the justification he speaketh of relate to that; to confirm which supposition, we may consider, that,

1. In several places justification is coupled with baptismal regeneration and absolution: *Such were some of you; but ye have been washed, ye have been sanctified, ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus:*[d] (where, by the way, *being sanctified* and *being justified* seem

* *Vide* Cyrill. adv. Julian. lib. vii. p. 248, where justification is very well described.

† ψιλὴ πίστις.

[d] 1 Cor. vi. 11.

equivalent terms; as in that place where Christ is said to *have given himself for the church, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,*[e] sanctification, I conceive, importeth the same thing with justification.) Again, *He saved us by the laver of regeneration, that having been justified by his grace, we may be made heirs of everlasting life.*[f]

2. St. Paul, in expressing this act, as it respecteth the faithful, commonly doth use a tense referring to the past time: he saith not δικαιούμενοι, *being justified,* but δικαιωθέντες, *having been justified;* not δικαιοῦσθε, *ye are justified,* but δικαιώθητε, *ye have been justified;*[g] namely, at some remarkable time, that is, at their entrance into Christianity. (Our translators do render it according to the present time; but it should be rendered as I say, in our text, and in other places.)

3. St. Paul in the 6th to the Romans discourseth thus:[h] Seeing we in baptism are cleansed and disentangled from sin, are *dead to it, and so justified from it,* God forbid that we should return to live in the practice thereof, so abusing and evacuating the grace we have received; which discourse seemeth plainly to signify, that he treateth about the justification conferred in baptism.

4. He expresseth the justification he speaketh of by the words πάρεσις τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων, *the passing over foregoing sins,*[i] which seemeth to respect that universal absolution which is exhibited in baptism. *Being* (saith he) *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*

5. The relation this justification hath to faith, being dispensed in regard thereto (or upon condition thereof), doth infer the same: Faith is nothing else but a hearty embracing Christianity, which first exerteth itself by open declaration and avowal in baptism (when we *believe with our hearts to righteousness, and confess with our mouth to salvation;*[j]) to that time, therefore, the act of justification may be supposed especially to appertain: then, when the evangelical covenant is solemnly ratified, the grace thereof especially is conferred. Upon such considerations I conceive that St. Paul's justification chiefly doth respect that act of grace which God consigneth to us at our baptism. But further,

2. The virtue and effect of that first justifying act doth continue (we abide in a justified state) so long as we do perform the conditions imposed by God, and undertaken by us at our first justification; *holding fast the profession of our hope without wavering, keeping faith and a good conscience;*[k] so long as we do not forfeit the benefit of that grace by *making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience,* relapsing into infidelity or profaneness of life.[l] Our case is plainly like to that of a subject, who having rebelled against his prince, and thence incurred his displeasure, but having afterward upon his submission, by the clemency of his prince, obtained an act of pardon, restoring him to favour and enjoyment of the protection and privileges suitable to a loyal subject, doth continue in this state, until by forsaking his allegiance, and running again into rebellion, he so loseth the benefit of that pardon, that his offence is aggravated thereby: so if we do persevere firm in faith and obedience, we shall (according to the purport of the evangelical covenant) continue in a state of grace and favour with God, and in effect remain justified; otherwise the virtue of our justification ceaseth, and we in regard thereto are more deeply involved in guilt.

3. Although justification chiefly signifieth the first act of grace toward a Christian at his baptism, yet, (according to analogy of reason, and affinity in the nature of things) every dispensation of pardon granted upon repentance may be styled justification; for as particular acts of repentance, upon the commission of any particular sins, do not so much differ in nature, as in measure or degree, from that general conversion practised in em-

[e] Eph. v. 25, 26; Heb. x. 29.
[f] Tit. iii. 5, 7; Heb. x. 22, 23.
[g] Rom. v. 1, 9; Tit. iii. 7; 1 Cor. vi. 11.
[h] Rom. vi.
[i] Rom iii. 25.
[j] Rom. x. 10.
[k] Heb. x. 23.
[l] 1 Tim i. 19; 2 Pet. ii. 20, &c.; Heb. x. 26, 38; vi. 1.

bracing the gospel; so the grace vouchsafed upon these penitential acts is only in largeness of extent, and solemnity of administration, diversified from that;* especially considering that repentance after baptism is but a reviving of that first great resolution and engagement we made in baptism; that remission of sin upon it is only the renovation of the grace then exhibited; that the whole transaction in this case is but a reinstating the covenant then made (and afterward by transgression infringed) upon the same terms, which were then agreed upon; that consequently, by congruous analogy, this remission of sins, and restoring to favour, granted to a penitent, are only the former justification reinforced; whence they may bear its name: but whether St. Paul ever meaneth the word to signify thus, I cannot affirm.

Now according to each of these notions, all good Christians may be said to have been justified; they have been justified by a general abolition of their sins, and reception into God's favour in baptism; they so far have enjoyed the virtue of that gracious dispensation, and continued in a justified state, as they have persisted in faith and obedience; they have upon falling into sin, and rising thence by repentance, been justified by particular remissions. So that *having been justified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Believe in God.

SERMON VI.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM THE FRAME OF THE WORLD.

JER. li. 15.—*He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.*[a]

THE attentive observation of this world, or visible frame, is not only in itself a most worthy employment of our thoughts (much more noble than any of those petty cares which commonly possess or distract our minds), but, if either the example of the best men, or the great usefulness thereof, to the best purposes, can oblige us, even a considerable duty not to be neglected by us. For it is that which affords most cogent and satisfactory arguments to convince us of, and to confirm us in, the belief of that truth which is the foundation of all religion and piety, the being of one God, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfections, the maker and upholder of all things; it instructs us not only that God is, but more distinctly shows what he is; declaring his chief and peculiar attributes of wisdom, goodness, and power, superlative; it also serves to beget in our minds affections toward God, suitable to those notions; a reverent adoration of his unsearchable wisdom; an awful dread of his powerful majesty; a grateful love of his gracious benignity and goodness: to these uses we find it applied by the best men, not only by the wisest philosophers among heathens, but by the holy prophets of God; who frequently harp upon this string, and make sweetest melody thereon; exciting both in themselves and others, pious thoughts and holy devotions therewith: strengthening their faith in God; advancing their reverence toward him; quickening and inflaming their love of him; magnifying his glory and praise thereby;[b] by the consideration, I say, of those wonderful effects discernible in nature, or appearing to us in this visible world. And if ever to imitate them herein were necessary, it seems to be so now, when a pretence to natural knowledge and acquaintance with these things, hath been so much abused to the promoting of atheism and irreligion; when that instrument which was chiefly designed, and is of itself most apt, to bring all reasonable creatures to the knowledge and to the veneration of their Maker, hath (in a method most preposterous and unnatural) been perverted to contrary ends and effects. To the preventing and removing which abuse, as every man should contribute what he can, so let me be allow-

* Pœnitentia imitatur baptismatis gratiam. —*Hier. adv. Pelag.* i. 10.

[a] Jer. x. 12.

[b] Psal. viii. 3; xix. 1; xxxiii. 5; lxxxix. 11; cxlviii. 5; civ. 5; cxv. 16; cxix. 64; cxlv. 10; cxlvii. 4.

ed to endeavour somewhat toward it, by representing briefly what my meditation did suggest, serving to declare, that (as the prophet asserts, or implies in the words I read) even in this visible world there are manifest tokens, or footsteps, by which we may discover it to be the work, or product, of one Being, incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good; to whom, consequently, we must owe the highest respect and love, all possible worship and service. Of these footsteps, or signs, there be innumerably many, which, singly taken, do discover such perfections to be concerned in the production of them: the relation of several to each other do more strongly and plainly confirm the same; the connection and correspondence of all together doth still add force and evidence thereto, each attesting to the existence of those perfections, all conspiring to declare them concentred and united in one cause and being.

1. View we first, singly, those things which are most familiar and obvious to our senses, (for only some such I mean to consider, such as any man awake, and in his senses, without any study or skill more than ordinary, without being a deep philosopher or a curious virtuoso, may, with an easy attention observe and discern;) view we such objects, I say; for instance, first, those plants we every day do see, smell, and taste; Have not that number, that figure, that order, that temperament, that whole contexture and contemperation of parts we discern in them, a manifest relation to those operations they perform? Were not such organs so fashioned, and so situated, and so tempered, and in all respects so fitted, some of them in order to the successive propagation of them (that they might in kind never fail or perish, but in that respect become as it were immortal;*) some in regard to their present nutrition and maintenance, (that the individuals themselves might not, before their due period of subsistence run through, be spent or destroyed;) some for shelter and defence against all sort of causes prejudicial to either of those continuances in being respectively; to omit those which serve for grace and ornament? (Do not, I say, the seed most evidently respect the propagation of the kind; the root the drawing of nourishment, the nervous filaments the conveyance of that; the skin or bark, the keeping altogether close and safe; the husks and shells, preservation of the seed; the leaves, defence of the fruit?) That such a constitution of parts is admirably fit for such purposes, we cannot be so stupid as not to perceive; we cannot but observe it necessary, for that by detraction, or altering any of them, we obstruct those effects. Whence then, I inquire, could that fitness proceed? from chance, or casual motions of matter? But is it not repugnant to the name and nature of chance, that any thing regular or constant should arise from it? that by it causes vastly many in number and different in quality (such as are the ingredients into the frame of the least organ in a plant), should, not once, not sometimes, not often only, but always, in one continual unaltered method concur to the same end and effect (to the same useful end, to the same handsome effect?) Are not confusion, disparity, deformity, unaccountable change and variety, the proper issues of chance?* It is Aristotle's discourse: *That one or two things* (saith he) *should happen to be in the same manner, is not unreasonable to suppose; but that all things should conspire by chance, it looks like a fiction to conceive: what is universal and perpetual, cannot result from chance. We can only* (saith he again) *with good reason assert, or suppose such causes of things as we see generally or frequently to occur.*† Now did we ever observe (or ever any man, through the whole course of times) any new thing like or comparable to any of these, to spring up casually? Do we not with admiration regard (as a thing very rare and unaccountable) in other pieces of matter

* Ἵνα τοῦ ἀεὶ, καὶ τοῦ θείου μετέχωσιν ᾗ δύνανται. —Arist. de An. ii. 4.

* —— Fortuna amica varietati constantiam respuit.—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* 2.——Ὁ λίαν ὑπερβάλλων ἀριθμὸς οὐ δύναται μετέχειν τάξεως. θείας γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο δυνάμεως ἔργον, ἥτις καὶ τόδε συνέχει τὸ πᾶν.—Arist. Pol. vii. 4.

† Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἓν ἢ δύο τοῦτον τρόπον ἔχειν, οὐδὲν ἄτοπον· τὸ δὲ πάνθ' ὁμοίως πλάσματι ἔοικεν, ἅμα δὲ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς φύσει τὸ ὡς ἔτυχεν. οὐδὲ τὸ πανταχοῦ, καὶ πᾶσιν ὑπάρχον τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχης.—De Cœlo, ii. 8.

Μόνο γὰρ ταῦτα θεῖον εὐλόγως, ὅσα ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἢ πάντων ὁρῶμεν ὑπάρχοντα.—Id. do Cœlo.

any gross resemblance to these, that seemeth to arise from contingent motions and occurrences of bodies? If chance hath formerly produced such things, how comes it, that it doth not sometimes now produce the like; whence becomes it for so many ages altogether impotent and idle? Is it not the same kind of cause? hath it not the same instruments to work with, and the same materials to work upon? The truth is, as it doth not now, so it did not, it could not ever, produce such effects; such effects are plainly improper and incongruous to such a cause: chance never writ a legible book; chance never built a fair house; chance never drew a neat picture; it never did any of these things, nor ever will; nor can be without absurdity supposed able to do them; which yet are works very gross and rude, very easy and feasible, as it were, in comparison to the production of a flower or a tree. It is not therefore reasonable to ascribe those things to chance: to what then? will you say, to necessity? If you do, you do only alter the phrase? for necessary causality (as applicable to this case, and taken without relation to some wisdom or counsel that established it) is but another name for chance; they both are but several terms denoting blindness and unadvisedness in action; both must imply a fortuitous determination of causes, acting without design or rule. A fortuitous determination, I say; for motions of matter, not guided by art or counsel, must be in their rise fortuitous (insomuch as that according to the nature of the thing there is no repugnance, and we may easily conceive it possible, that the matter might have been moved otherwise; there being therein no principle originally determining it to this more than to that sort of motion;) and the same motions in their process must be determinate, because in their subject there is no principle whereby it can alter its course. The same effect, therefore, of this kind, if necessary, is casual as to its original, and in that respect may be said to come from chance; if casual, is necessary in the progress, and may thence be said to proceed from necessity. And although we should suppose the beginning of these causes in their action, or motion, to be eternal, it were all one; for whether now, or yesterday, or from eternity, infers no difference (except the entangling our minds, and encumbering the case with impertinent circumstances) as to our purpose; not the circumstance of the time, but the quality of the cause, being only here considerable; the same causes (abstracting from all counsel ordering them) being alike apt or inept yesterday as to-day, always as sometimes, from all eternity as at any set time, to produce such effects. Neither can we therefore reasonably attribute the effects we speak of to necessity; except only to such an hypothetical necessity, as implies a determination from causes acting by will and understanding; of such a necessity matter is very susceptive; being perfectly obedient to art directing it with competent force; as on the other hand we find it by reason and experience altogether unapt, without such direction, of itself (that is, either necessarily or contingently) to come into any regular form, or to pursue any constant course; it being, as we see, shattered into particles innumerable, different in size, shape, and motion, according to all variety more than imaginable; thence only fit in their proceedings to cross and confound each other: the determination, therefore, of such causes as these, to such ends and effects, can be only the result of wisdom, art, and counsel; which alone (accompanied with sufficient power) can digest things, void of understanding, into handsome order, can direct them unto fit uses, can preserve them in a constant tenor of action: these effects must therefore, I say, proceed from wisdom, and that no mean one, but such as greatly surpasses our comprehension, joined with a power equally great; for to digest bodies so very many, so very fine and subtile, so diverse in motion and tendency, that they shall never hinder or disturb one another, but always conspire to the same design, is a performance exceedingly beyond our capacity to reach how it could be contrived or accomplished: all the endeavours of our deepest skill and most laborious industry cannot arrive to the producing of any work not extremely inferior to any of these, not in comparison very simple and base; neither can our wits serve to devise, nor our sense to direct, nor our hand to execute

any work, in any degree like to those. So that it was but faintly, though truly, said of him in Cicero, concerning things of this kind, *Nature's powerful sagacity, no skill, no hand, no artist, can follow by imitation.**

And if we have reason to acknowledge so much wisdom and power discovered in one plant, and the same consequently multiplied in so many thousands of diverse kinds; how much more may we discern them in any one animal, in all of them! the parts of whom, in unconceivable variety, in delicate minuteness, in exquisiteness of shape, position, and temper, do indeed so far exceed the other, as they appear designed to functions far more various and more noble; the enumeration of a few whereof, obvious to our sense, in some one living creature, together with conjectures about their manner of operation and their use, how much industry of man hath it employed; how many volumes hath it filled, and how many more may it do, without detecting a ten thousandth part of what is there most obvious and easy; without piercing near the depth of that wisdom which formed so curious a piece! So much however is palpably manifest, that each of these so many organs was designed, and fitted on purpose to that chief use, or operation, we see it to perform; this, of them to continue the kind; that, to preserve the *individuum;* this, to discern what is necessary, convenient ,or pleasant to the creature, or what is dangerous, offensive, or destructive thereto; that, to pursue or embrace, to decline or shun it; this, to enjoy what is procured of good; that, to remove what is hurtful or useless, or to guard from mischief and injury; that each one is furnished with such apt instruments, suitable to its particular needs, appetites, capacities, stations, is most apparent; and I must therefore here ask again (and that with more advantage), whence this could proceed; whence all these parts came to be fashioned and suited; all of them so necessary, or so convenient, that none without the imperfection and the prejudice of the creature, some not without its destruction, can be wanting? Who shaped and tempered those hidden subtile springs of life, sense, imagination, memory, passion? who impressed on them a motion so regular and so durable, which through so many years, among so many adverse contingencies assailing it, is yet so steadily maintained? Can this, however, proceed from giddy chance, or blind necessity? could ever (of old or lately, it is all one) senseless matter jumble itself so fortunately, into so wonderful postures, so that of those innumerable myriads of atoms, or small insensible bodies (which compose each of these curious engines), none should in its roving miss the way; none fail to stop and seat itself in that due place, where exactest art would have disposed it?* Could so many, so dim, so narrow marks, be hit without the aim of a most piercing and unerring eye; without the guidance of a most steady and immoveable hand? All that grace and beauty, which so delights our sense beholding it; all that correspondence and symmetry, which so satisfies our mind considering it; all that virtue and energy, extending to performances so great and admirable, must they be ascribed to causes of no worth, and supposed done to no purpose? that eye which reaches the very stars, and in a moment renders all the world, as it were, present to the creature that useth it; that ear which perceives the least stirring of the air about it, and so subtly distinguishes the smallest differences in its motion; that tongue which so readily is composed to imitate so many petty diversities of tune;† those other organs, which are affected by the least breath or vapour, by the least tang or savour, so that it by them can both perceive the presence, and distinguish the quality of whatever is near, that it may not be disappointed in missing what is beneficial, nor be surprised by the assault of what is noxious thereto; all these and many more, the defect, distemper, or dislocation of which would be disgraceful, incommodious, or destructive to the creature; all these, I say, can any man, endued with common

* Naturæ solertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex consequi possit imitando.—*Cic. de N. D.* ii. 32.

* Ἔπελθε τῶν μελῶν ἁπάντων τὴν διάπλασιν, τὸ σχῆμα, τὰς ἐνεργείας, τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα συμφωνίαν· καὶ πάσης πόλεως εὐνομουμένης καὶ φιλοσόφους ἅπαντας τοὺς πολίτας ἐχούσης ἀκριβεστέραν ὄψει τὴν μελῶν τούτων πρὸς ἄλληλα πολιτείαν.—Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 69.

† *Vide* Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ια'.

sense, or ordinary ingenuity, affirm to have proceeded from any other cause, than from a wisdom and power incomprehensible?* May not the most excellent pieces of human artifice, the fairest structures, the finest portraitures, the most ingenious and useful inquiries, such as we are wont most to admire and commend, with infinitely more ease, happen to exist without any contrivance or industry spent upon them? If we cannot allow those rude imitations of nature to spring up of themselves, but as soon as we espy them are ready to acknowledge them products of excellent art, though we know not the artist, nor did see him work; how much more reason is there that we should believe those works of nature, so incomparably more accurate, to proceed also from art, although invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a secret hand? I can assure you, of those who have with greatest attention contemplated these things, and who pass for men most able to judge in the case (even those who have discovered least affection to religion, or indeed are more than suspected of an aversion from it; whose words therefore may be taken at least for impartial dictates of common sense), that even from such, the irresistible force and evidence of the thing hath extorted clear and ample confessions to this purpose:† that in nature nothing is performed without reason or design; but every thing in the best manner and to the best end, beyond what is done in any art, is frequently asserted and assumed by Aristotle himself, as a most evident truth: that in contriving the frame of our bodies (and the same holdeth concerning the bodies of other animals), a wisdom inscrutable; in accomplishing it, a power insuperable; in designing to them so much of decency and convenience, a benignity worthy of all veneration are demonstrated, Galen in several places, with language very full and express, yea very earnest and pathetical, doth acknowledge.* That who doth attently regard a locust, or a caterpillar, or any other viler animal, shall every where therein discover a wonderful art and diligence, is an aphorism dropt even from the gloomy pen of Cardan.† That *if any man shall view thoroughly all the instruments both of generation and nutrition, and doth not perceive them to have been made and ordered to their respective offices by some mind* (or intelligent agent), *he is to be reputed himself void of mind*‡ or out of his wits), is the expression of another person well known among us, whom few do judge partial to this side, or suspicious of bearing a favourable prejudice to religion. Thus doth common sense from these sort of beings, whereof there be innumerable exposed daily to our observation, even singly considered, deduced the existence of a wisdom, power, and goodness unconceivably great; and there are probably divers others (stones, metals, minerals, &c.) no less obvious, even here upon the earth, our place of dwelling, which, were our senses able to discern their constitution and texture, would afford matter of the same acknowledgment.‖

II. But if, passing from such particulars, we observe the relation of several kinds of things each to other, we shall find more reason to be convinced concerning the same excellent perfections further extending themselves. By such comparison we may easily discern, that what speaks much of art in itself singly considered, declares more thereof in respect to other things; and that many things, in which separately looked upon we could perceive but small artifice, have

* Μή τι ἀχρηστότερον τριχῶν τοῦ ἐπιγενείου; τί οὖν οὐ συνεχρήσατο καὶ ταύταις ὡς μάλιστα πρεπόντως ἐδύνατο; οὐ διέκρινε δι' αὐτῶν τὸ ἄῤῥεν καὶ τὸ θῆλυ, &c. Epict. i. 16.

† Arist. de Part. An. i. 1.—Μᾶλλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα, καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις, ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης.

Ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον. —Phys. ii. 8.

Ἡ φύσις οὐδὲν ἀλόγως οὐδὲ μάτην ποιεῖ.—De Cœlo, ii. 11.

Ἕνεκα τοῦ ἅπαντα ὑπάρχει τὰ φύσει.—De Anima, iii. 12.

* Gal. de Placitis Hippoc. et Plat. lib. 7, de Usu. Part 3.—Οἷος μὲν ἐστὶ τὴν σοφίαν, οἷος δὲ τὴν δύναμιν, ὁποῖος δὲ τὴν χρηστότητα, &c.

† *Card. de Variet.* vii. 27, page 283.

‡ Itaque ad sensus procedo, satis habens si hujusmodi res attigero tantum, plenius autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui si machinas omnes tum generationis, tum nutritionis satis perspexerint, nec tamen eas a mente aliqua conditas, ordinatasque ad sua quasque officia viderint, ipsi profecto sine mente esse censendi sunt.—*Hobbes. de Hom.* cap. 1.

‖ Νὴ τὸν Δία καὶ τοὺς Θεοὺς ἓν τῶν γεγονότων ἀπήρκει πρὸς τὸ αἰθέσθαι τῆς προνοίας τῷ γε αἰδήμονι, καὶ εὐχαρίστῳ.—Epict. i. 16.

indeed much of it in such relation (which although seeming in themselves mean and despicable, are yet very useful and necessary to considerable purposes, in subserviency to the convenience of more noble beings;) and though perhaps we cannot thoroughly penetrate the relative use and design of every thing which hangs up before us in nature's shop (by reason of our incapacity, or unskilfulness in her trade), yet we shall have reason, from what we can plainly discover, to collect that each piece there is a tool accommodate to some use. Is there not, for instance, a palpable relation between the frame, the temper, the natural inclinations or instincts, of each animal, and its element, or natural place and abode; wherein it can only live, finding therein its food, its harbour, its refuge? Is not to each faculty within (or to each sensitive organ) an object without prepared, exactly correspondent thereto; which were it wanting, the faculty would become vain and useless, yea sometime harmful and destructive; as reciprocally the object would import little or nothing, if such a faculty were not provided and suited thereto?* As for example, what would an eye (or the visive power) signify, if there were not light prepared to render things visible thereto? and how much less considerable than it is would the goodly light itself be, were all things in nature blind, and uncapable to discern thereby? What would the ear serve for, if the air were not suitably disposed (made neither too thick nor too thin; neither too resty nor too fleeting, but) in a due consistency, and capable of moderate undulations distinguishable thereby? The like we might with the same reason inquire concerning the other senses and faculties, vital or animal, and their respective objects, which we may observe with admirable congruity respecting each other. Have not all those goodly colours, and comely shapes, which in the leaves, the flowers, and the fruits of plants (I might add in gems and precious stones; yea in all sorts of living creatures) we behold, an evident respect to the sight, and the sight a no less visible reference to them? Those many kinds of pleasant fragrancy in herbs, flowers, and spices, have they not a like manifest relation to the smell, and it to them? Could all that great variety of wholesome, savoury, and delicious fruits, herbs, grains, pulses, seeds, and roots, become so constantly produced, otherwise than for the purpose of feeding and sustaining living creatures with pleasure and content? Is there not a notorious correspondence between them and the organs of taste, digestion, and nutrition? Are there not appetites prompting, yea with intolerable pain provoking each living creature to seek its proper sustenance? and doth it not find in the enjoyment hereof a pleasure and satisfaction unexpressible? Let me add: whence comes it to pass, that ordinarily in nature nothing occurs noisome or troublesome to any sense; but all things wholesome and comfortable, at least innocent or inoffensive? that we may wander all about without being urged to shut our eyes, to stop our ears, our mouths, our noses; but rather invited to open all the avenues of our soul, for admission of the kind entertainments nature sets before us? Doth she not every where present spectacles of delight (somewhat of lively picture, somewhat of gay embroidery, somewhat of elegant symmetry) to our eyes, however seldom any thing appears horrid or ugly to them? Where is it that we meet with noises so violent or so jarring as to offend our ears? is not there rather provided for us, wherever we go, some kind of harmony grateful to them; not only in fields and woods the sweet chirping of birds; by rivers the soft warbling of the stream; but even the rude winds whistle in a tune not unpleasant; the tossing seas yield a kind of solemn and graver melody? All the air about us, is it not (not only not noisome to our smell, but) very comfortable and refreshing? and doth not even the dirty earth yield a wholesome and medicinal scent? So many, so plain, so exactly congruous, are the relations of things hereabout us each to other; which surely could not otherwise come than from one admirable wisdom and power con-

* Εἰ χρώματα ὁ Θεὸς ποιήσει, ὄναμιν δὲ θεατικὴν αὐτῶν μὴ ποιήσει, τί ἂν ἦν ὄφελος; οὐδοτιοῦν· ἀλλ' ἀνάπαλιν, εἰ τὴν μὲν ὄναμιν ποιήσει, τὰ ὄντα δὲ μὴ τοιαῦτα, οἷα ὑποπίπτειν τῇ ὀνάμει τῇ ὁρατικῇ, καὶ οὕτω τι ἦν ὄφελος; οὐδοτιοῦν τι δ' εἰ καὶ ἀμφότερα ταῦτα ποιήσει, φῶς δὲ μὴ ποιήσει· οὐδ' οὕτω τι ὄφελος· τίς οὖν ὁ ἁρμόσας τοῦτο πρὸς ἐκεῖνο, καὶ ἐκεῖνο πρὸς τοῦτο;—Epict. i. 6.

spiring thus to adapt and connect them together; as also from an equal goodness, declared in all these things being squared so fitly for mutual benefit and convenience. These considerations are applicable to all (even to the meaner sorts of) animals; which being the only creatures capable of joy and pleasure, or liable to grief and pain, it was fit that insensible things should be disposed to serve their needs and uses; which hath been with so wondeful a care performed, that of so vast a number, among them there is none so vile or contemptible (no worm, no fly, no insect), for whose maintenance, whose defence, whose satisfaction, competent (shall I say, or abundant) provision hath not been made, both intrinsical (by a frame of organs fitting them to obtain and to enjoy what is good for them, to shun and repel what is bad; by strong appetites inciting them to search after and pursue, or to beware and decline respectively; by strange instincts enabling them to distinguish between what is fit for them to procure or embrace, to remove or avoid;) and extrinsical also, bv a great variety of conveniences, answerable to their several desires and needs, dispersed all about, and every where, as it were, offered to them. So that the holy Psalmist (considering this and taking upon him to be, as it were, their chaplain) had reason to say this grace for them: *The eyes of all wait upon thee and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*[c] But especially (that which as reason enables us, so due gratitude obliges us, and prompts us, especially to observe) there is an evident regard (so evident that even Pliny, a professed Epicurean, could not forbear acknowledging it) which all things bear to man, the prince of creatures visible;* they being all, as on purpose, ordered to yield tribute unto him, to supply his wants, to gratify his desires; with profit and pleasure to exercise his faculties; to content, as it were, even his humour and curiosity.* All things about us do minister (or at least may do so, if we would improve the natural instruments, and the opportunities afforded us) to our preservation, ease, or delight. The hidden bowels of the earth yield us treasures of metals and minerals, quarries of stone and coal, so necessary, so serviceable to divers good uses, that we could not commodiously be without them; the vilest and most common stones we tread on (even in that we tread on them) are useful, and serve to many good purposes beside:* the surface of the earth, how is it bespread all over, as a table well furnished, with variety of delicate fruits, herbs, and grains, to nourish our bodies, to please our tastes, to cheer our spirits, to cure our diseases! how many fragrant and beautiful flowers offer themselves for the comfort of our smell and the delight of our sight! Neither can our ears complain, since every wood breeds a quire of natural musicians, ready to entertain them with easy and unaffected harmony. The woods, I say, which also adorned with stately trees afford us a pleasant view and a refreshing shade, shelter from weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our houses and our shipping; with divers other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary to the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance of our wares, and maintaining intercourse among us. Yea the wide seas are not (altogether unprofitable) wastes; but freely yield us, without our tillage, many rich harvests, transmitting our commerce and traffick, furnishing our tables with stores of dainty fish, supplying the bottles of heaven with waters to refresh the earth, being inexhaustible cisterns, from whence our rivers and fountains are derived; the very rude and boisterous winds themselves fulfil God's word (which once commanded all things to be good, and approved them to be so) by yielding manifold services to

* Ejus (hominis) causa videtur cuncta alia genuisse natura.—*Plin.* lib. vi. cap. 1.

Ut omnis rerum naturæ pars tributum aliquod nobis conferret.—*Sen. de Benef.* 4, 5.

Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodo nostris provisum est; usque in delicias amamur. —*Ibid.*

Ut interdum Pronœa nostra Epicurea esse videatur.—*Cic. de N. D.* 2.

[c] Psal. cxlv. 15, 16.

* Vera est sententia Stoicorum, qui aiunt nostra causa mundum esse constructum. Omnia enim quibus constat, quæque generat ex se mundus, ad utilitatem hominis accommodata sunt.—*Lact. de Ira*, 13.

us ;[d] in brushing and cleansing the air for our health, in driving forward our ships (which without their friendly help could not stir), in gathering together, in scattering, in spreading abroad the clouds; the clouds, those paths of God, *which drop fatness*[e] upon our fields and pastures. As for our living subjects, all the inferior sorts of animals, it is hardly possible to reckon the manifold benefits we receive from them; how many ways they supply our needs with pleasant food and convenient clothing, how they ease our labour, how they promote even our recreation and sport. Thus have all things upon this earth (as is fit and seemly they should have) by the wise and gracious disposal of the great Creator, a reference to the benefit of its noblest inhabitant, most worthy and most able to use them: many of them have an immediate reference to man (as necessary to his being, or conducible to his well-being; being fitted thereto, to his hand, without his care, skill, or labour), others a reference to him, more mediate indeed, yet as reasonable to suppose; I mean such things, whose usefulness doth in part depend upon the exercise of our reason, and the instruments subservient thereto: for what is useful by the help of reason, doth as plainly refer to the benefit of a thing naturally endowed with that faculty, as what is agreeable to sense refers to a thing merely sensitive: we may therefore, for instance as reasonably suppose that iron was designed for our use, though first we be put to dig for it, then must employ many arts, and much pains, before it become fit for our use;[f] as that the stones were therefore made, which lie open to our view; and which without any preparation we easily apply to the pavement of our streets, or the raising of our fences: also, the grain we sow in our grounds, or the trees which we plant in our orchards, we have reason to conceive as well provided for us, as those plants which grow wildly and spontaneously; for that sufficient means are bestowed on us of compassing such ends, and rendering those things useful to us; (a reason able to contrive what is necessary in order thereto, and a hand ready to execute), it being also reasonable, that something should be left for the improvement of our reason, and employment of our industry, lest our noblest powers should languish and decay by sloth, or want of fit exercise.*

Well, then, is it to a fortuitous necessity (or a necessary chance) that we owe all these choice accommodations and preeminences of nature? must we bless and worship fortune for all this? did she so especially love us, and tender our good? was she so indulgent toward us, so provident for us in so many things, in every thing; making us the scope of all her workings and motions here about us? Must we change style, and say, fortune pours down blessings on our heads, fortune crowns us with lovingkindness, fortune daily loads us with her benefits? Shall we not only esteem these good things her gifts, but even acknowledge ourselves her offsprings, and reverence her as our mother; disclaiming so noble a parent as Wisdom Omnipotent; disowning so worthy a benefactor as Sovereign Goodness? O brutish degeneracy! O hellish depravedness of mind! Are we not, not only wretchedly blind and stupid, if we are not able to discern so clear beams of wisdom shining through so many perspicuous correspondences; if we cannot trace the Divine power by footsteps so express and remarkable;† if we cannot read legible characters of transcendent goodness; but extremely unworthy and ungrateful, if we are not ready to acknowledge, and with hearty thankfulness to celebrate all these excellent perfections, by which all these things have been so ordered, as to conspire and co-operate for our benefit? Methinks the very perception of so much good, the continual enjoyment of so many accommodations, the frequent satisfaction of so many senses and appetites, should put us in so good humour, that when we feel our hearts replenished with food and gladness,[g] when we so delightfully relish nature's dainties, when we with pleasure view this fair scene of things, when our ears are ravished with harmonious

[d] Psal. cxlviii. 8.
[e] Psal. lxv. 11, 12, &c.
[f] Epict. i. 16.

* —— Pater ipse colendi. Haud facilem esse viam voluit, &c.—Curis acuens mortalia corda.—*Virg.*

† Οὐχ ἑαυτὸν ἀμάρτυρον ἀφῆκεν, ἀγαθοποιῶν, &c. —Acts xiv. 17.

[g] Acts xiv. 17.

sounds, when our spirits are exhilarated with those natural perfumes shed about our gardens, our woods, and our fields, we should not be able to forbear devoutly crying out with the Psalmist, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches: The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy and bounty: Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him! or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him?* that *thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things under his feet?*[h] Under his feet; and such in a manner, according to proper and direct meaning, are all those things which we have as yet touched upon; so many arguments of the divinity even looking downwards, as it were (if we do not so look rather like beasts than men), we may upon this little spot of our habitation perceive: but if, employing our peculiar advantage, we lift up our eyes and minds towards heaven, there in a larger volume, and in a brighter character, we shall behold the testimonies of perfection and majesty stupendous described: as our eyes are dazzled with the radiant light coming thence, so must the vast amplitude, the stately beauty, the decent order, the steady course, the beneficial efficacy of those glorious lamps astonish our minds, fixing their attention upon them; he that shall, I say, consider with what precise regularity and what perfect constancy those (beyond our imagination) vast bodies perform their rapid motions, what pleasure, comfort, and advantage, their light and heat do yield us, how their kindly influences conduce to the general preservation of all things here below (impregnating the womb of this cold and dull lump of earth with various sorts of life, with strange degrees of activity), how necessary (or how convenient at least) the certain recourses of seasons made by them are; how can he but wonder, and wondering adore that transcendency of beneficent wisdom and power, which first disposed them into, which still preserves them in, such a state and order? That all of them should be so regulated, as for so many ages together (even through all memories of time), to persist in the same posture, to retain the same appearances, not to alter discernibly in magnitude, in shape, in situation, in distance each from other; but to abide fixed, as it were, in their unfixedness, and steady in their restless motions; not to vary at all sensibly in the time of their revolution (so that one year was ever observed to differ in an hour, or one day in a minute, from another), doth it not argue a constant will directing them, and a mighty hand upholding them?* It did so, Plutarch tells us, to the common apprehensions of men in ancient times; who from these observations deduced the existence and notion of a God; because, saith he, *they took notice that the sun, the moon, and the rest of the stars, taking their course about the earth, did constantly arise alike in their colours, equal in their bignesses, in the same places, and at the same times.*† Reason dictated to them what the inspired Psalmist sings concerning the heavenly host; that God *commanded, and they were created; he hath also established them for ever and ever, by a decree that shall not pass.*[i] And surely, those celestial squadrons could never be ranged in a form so proper, and march on so regularly, without the marshalling, and without the conduct of a most skilful captain. He that can seriously ascribe all this to an undisciplined and unconducted troop of atoms rambling up and down confusedly through the field of infinite space, what might he not as easily assert or admit?[j] Certainly, he that can think so, can think any thing; and labour were vainly spent in further endeavour to con-

[h] Psal. civ. 24; cxix. 64; xxxiii. 5; viii. 4; cxliv. 3; viii. 6.

* Ordo autem siderum et in omni æternitate constantia neque naturam significat; est enim plena rationis: neque fortunam, quæ amica varietati constantiam respuit.—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 16.

Οὐδέποτε οὖν ἐν χειμῶνι μακρὰ γέγονεν ἡ ἡμέρα, ὥσπερ οὐδέποτε ἐν θέρει μακρὰ γέγονεν ἡ νύξ, τοσούτων παρελθουσῶν γενεῶν· ἀλλὰ ἐν τοσούτῳ διαστήματι καὶ μήκει, οὐδὲ ἀκαριαῖοι, οὐχ ἡμιώριον, οὐ ῥιπὴν ὀφθαλμοῦ ἡ ἑτέρα τὴν ἑρέραν ἐπγεονέκτησε.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. θ'.

† Ἀεί τε γὰρ ἥλιος καὶ σελήνη, καί τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἄστρων τὴν ὑπόγειον φορὰν ὑνεχθέντα ὅμοια μὲν ἀνατέλλει τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἴσα δὲ τοῖς μεγέθεσι, καὶ κατὰ τόπους, καὶ κατὰ χρόνους τοὺς αὐτούς.—Plut. de Plac. i. 6.

[i] Psal. cxlvii. 5, 6.

[j] Isa. xl. 26; xlv. 12; Dan. iv. 35; Neh. ix. 6.

vince him. So even pagan philosophers have judged; upon whom what impression this consideration hath made, we may learn from these words of one among them, Cicero: *Who* (saith he) *would call him a man, that beholding such certain motions of heaven, thus settled ranks of stars, all things there so connected and suited together, should deny there were a reason in them, or should affirm those things done by chance which by no understanding we can reach with how great counsel they are performed?* And, *What other thing* (adds he) *can be so open and so perspicuous, to us that shall behold the heavens and contemplate things celestial, as that there is a most excellent Divinity by which these things are governed?** Thus do *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handywork:*[k] yea, thus we have reason to acknowledge with Nehemiah, *Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all.*[l] Thus, every thing above and below us, before and behind, on this, on that, on every side of us, yields more than a simple attestation to the existence of its glorious Maker; each of them singly, several of them together, giving their vote and suffrage thereto.†

III. Yea, which was the last consideration intimated, all of them join together in one universal consort, with one harmonious voice, to proclaim one and the same wisdom to have designed, one and the same power to have produced, one and the same goodness to have set both wisdom and power on work in designing and in producing their being; in preserving and governing it:* for this whole system of things, what is it, but one goodly body, as it were, compacted of several members and organs; so aptly compacted together, that each confers its being and its operation to the grace and ornament, to the strength and stability of the whole; one soul (of divine Providence) enlivening in a manner, and actuating it all? Survey it all over, and we shall have reason to say with the philosopher, *All the parts of the world are so constituted, that they could not be either better for use, nor more beautiful for show.*† In it we shall espy nothing in substance superfluous or defective; nothing in shape deformed, in position misplaced, in motion exhorbitant, so as to prejudice the beauty or welfare of the whole.‡ We may perhaps not discern the use of each part, or the tendency of each particular effect; but of many they are so plain and palpable, that reason obliges us to suppose the like of the rest. Even as a person whom we observe frequently to act with great consideration and prudence, when at other times we cannot penetrate the drift of his proceedings, we must yet imagine that he hath some latent reason, some reach of policy, that we are not aware of; or, as in an engine consisting of many parts, curiously combined, whereof we do perceive the general use, and apprehend how divers parts thereof conduce thereto, reason prompts us (although we neither see them all, nor can comprehend the immediate serviceableness of some) to think they are all in some way or other subservient to the artist's design: such an agent is God, the wisdom of whose proceedings being in so many instances notorious, we ought to suppose it answerable in the rest; such an engine is this

* Quis hunc hominem dixerit, qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, tamque inter se connexa et apta viderit, neget his ullam inesse rationem, eaque casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus?—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 38.

Quid potest esse tam apertum, tamque perspicuum, cum cœlum suspeximus, cœlestiaque contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur?—*Ibid.* ii. 2.

Τὶς οὖν οὕτως ἄθλιος καὶ ταλαίπωρος, ὡς ὁρῶν μὲν οὐρανὸν, ὁρῶν δὲ θάλατταν καὶ γῆν, ὁρῶν δὲ τοσαύτην ὑλῶν εὐκρασίαν οὕτως ἀκριβῆ, καὶ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἀδιάπτωτον τάξιν, νομίζειν αὐτομάτως ταῦτα γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ προσκυνεῖν τὸν ἅπαντα ταῦτα μετὰ σοφίας τῆς προσηκούσης διαταξάμενον;—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. θ'.

† Quocunque te flexeris, ibi Deum videbis occurrentem tibi, &c.—*Sen. de Benef.* iv. 8.

[k] Psal. xix. 1.

[l] Neh. ix. 6; Isa. xxxvii. 16.

* —— ἐποίησεν ὡς ἀγαθὸς τὸ χρήσιμον, ὡς σοφὸς τὸ κάλλιστον, ὡς δυνατὸς τὸ μέγιστον.—Bas. Hexaem. λ. α.

† Omnes mundi partes ita constitutæ sunt, ut neque ad usum meliores potuerint esse, nec ad speciem pulchriores.—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 34.

‡ Μηδὲν ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ μάτην, μηδὲ ἀπολείπει τῶν ἀναγκαίων.—Arist. iii. de Anim. cap. 10.

world, of which we may easily enough discern the general end, and how many of its parts do conduce thereto; and cannot therefore in reason but suppose the rest in their kind alike congruous, and conducible to the same purpose: our incapacity to discover all doth not argue any defect, but an excess of wisdom in the design thereof; not too little perfection in the work, but too great an one rather, in respect to our capacity: however, we plainly see the result of all to be the durable continuance of things, without interruption or change, in the same constant uniform state; which shows that in the world there is no seed of corruption, as it were;* no inclination to dissolution or decay; nothing that tends to the discomposure or destruction of the whole: each ingredient thereof (of those so unconceivably numerous) consists within its proper limits; not encroaching immoderately upon, not devouring or disturbing another in its course; contrary qualities therein serving to a due temperament, opposite inclinations begetting a just poise, particular vicissitudes conferring to a general settlement; private deaths and corruptions maintaining the public life and health, producing a kind of youthful vigour in the whole: so that six thousand years together hath this great machine stood, always one and the same, unimpaired in its beauty, unworn in its parts, unwearied and undisturbed in its motions.† If, then, as Plutarch says, *no fair thing is ever produced by hazard, but with art framing it;*‡ how could this most fair comprehension of all fair things be not the lawful issue of art, but a by-blow of fortune; of fortune, the mother only of broods monstrous and misshapen?* If the nature of any cause be discoverable by its effects; if from any work we may infer the workman's ability; if in any case the results of wisdom are distinguishable from the consequences of chance, we have reason to believe, that the Architect of this magnificent and beautiful frame was one incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good Being;† and to conclude with Cicero, *Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, et eam suscipiendam, adorandamque hominum generi pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri,*‡ the sense of which saying we cannot better render or express than in St. Paul's words: *The invisible things of God by the making* (or rather by the make and constitution) *of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;* so that, I adjoin after him, *they are inexcusable who* from hence *do not know God;*[m] or knowing him, do not render unto him his due glory and service.

* Ῥύσεις καὶ ἀλλοιώσεις ἀνανέοῦσι τὸν κόσμον διηνεκῶς.—Anton. vi. 15; xii. 13.

Αἱ μὲν γενέσεις ἐπαναστέλλουσι τὰς φθορὰς, αἱ δὲ φθοραὶ κουφίζουσι τὰς γενέσεις· μία δ' ἐκ πάντων περαινομένων σωτηρία διατελεῖ.—Auct. de Mund. cap. v.

† Omnia pereundo servantur; omnia de interitu reformantur, &c.—*Tertull. Apol.* cap. 48.

Ὁ μέγας καὶ θαυμαστὸς τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτοῦ κήρυξ.—Greg. Naz. Or. 43.

—— Ἕκαστον μένει καθάπερ τινὶ χαλινῷ καὶ δεσμῷ τῷ βουλήματι τοῦ ποίησαντος τοὺς οἰκείους διαφυλάττον δρους, καὶ ἡ μάχη τούτων εἰρήνης αἰτία γίνεται τῷ παντί. Chrys. Orat. 47, 48, tom. vi.

‡ Οὐδὲν τῶν καλῶν εἰκῆ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε γίνεται, ἀλλὰ μετά τινος τέχνης δημιουργούσης.—Plut. de Plac. i. 6.

* Quod si mundum efficere potest concursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest, quæ sunt multo minus operosa, et multo quidem faciliora?—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 37.

† Κοσμος καλὸν ποίκιλμα τέκτονος σοφοῦ.—Eurip.

‡ Cic. ii. de Nat. Deor. page 89; Ἀριστοτέχνας, Epitheton Dei.—*Pind.*

[m] Rom. i. 20.

I Believe in God.

SERMON VII.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM THE FRAME OF HUMAN NATURE.

GEN. i. 27.—*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.*

THE belief of God's existence is the foundation of all religion, if which be not well laid in our minds by convincing reasons, the superstructures standing thereon may easily be in danger of being shaken and ruined; especially being assailed by the winds of temptation and opposition, which everywhere blow so violently in

this irreligious age. No discourses therefore can perhaps be more needful (or seasonably useful), than such as do produce and urge reasons of that kind, apt to establish that foundation. Of such there be, I conceive, none better, or more suitable to common capacity, than those which are drawn from effects apparent to men's general observation and experience, the which cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other cause than unto God; that is (according to the notion commonly answering to that name), to a Being incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good. Of such effects there be innumerably many in this sensible world among things natural, more strictly so called, that is, subsisting and acting without immediate use of understanding or choice; the constitutions and operations of which (being evidently directed according to very much reason, and to very good purpose) do evince their being framed and ordered by such a Being; as I have formerly, with a competent largeness, endeavoured to show. But beside those, there is exposed to our observation, yea subject to our inward conscience, another sort of beings, acting in another manner, and from other principles; having in them a spring of voluntary motion and activity; not, as the rest, necessarily determined, or driven on, by a kind of blind violence, in one direct road to one certain end; but guiding themselves with judgment and choice, by several ways, toward divers ends; briefly, endued with reason, to know what and why; and with liberty, to choose what and how they should act; and that this sort of beings (that is, we ourselves, all mankind) did proceed from the same source or original cause, as it is in way of history delivered and affirmed in our text, so I shall now endeavour by reason (apt to persuade even those who would not allow this sacred authority) to show. Indeed, if the *eternal power and divinity of God may* (as St. Paul tells us) *be seen in all the works of God;*[a] the same peculiarly and principally will appear observable in this masterpiece, as it were, of the great Artificer: if the meanest creatures reflect somewhat of light, by which we may discern the Divine existence and perfections; in this fine and best polished mirror we shall more clearly discover the same: no where so much of God will appear as in this work, which was designedly formed to resemble and represent him. This, then, is the subject of our present Discourse, That in man, well considered, we may discern manifest footsteps of that incomprehensibly excellent Being impressed upon him; and this doubly, both in each man singly taken, and in men as standing in conjunction or relation to each other: considering man's nature, we shall have reason to think it to have proceeded from God; considering human societies, we shall see cause to suppose them designed and governed by God.

[a] Rom. i. 20.

I. Consider we first any one single man, or that human nature abstractedly, whereof each individual person doth partake; and whereas that doth consist of two parts, one material and external, whereby man becomes a sensible part of nature, and hath an eminent station among visible creatures; the other, that interior and invisible principle of operations peculiarly called human: as to the former, we did, among other such parts of nature, take cognizance thereof, and even in that discovered plain marks of a great wisdom that made it, of a great goodness taking care to maintain it. The other now we shall chiefly consider, in which we may discern not only σημεῖα, but ὁμοιώματα, of the Divine existence and efficiency; not only large tracks, but express footsteps; not only such signs as smoke is of fire, or a picture of the painter that drew it, but even such as the spark is of fire, and the picture of its original.

1. And first, that man's nature did proceed from some efficient cause, it will (as of other things of nature) be reasonable to suppose. For if not so, then it must either spring up of itself, so that at some determinate beginning of time, or from all eternity, some one man, or some number of men, did of themselves exist; or there hath been a succession, without beginning, of continual generations indeterminate (not terminated in any root, one or more, of singular persons.)

Now, generally, that man did not at

any time in any manner spring up of himself, appears, 1. From history and common tradition; which (as we shall otherwhere largely show) deliver the contrary; being therein more credible than bare conjecture or precarious assertion, destitute of testimony or proof. 2. From the present constant manner of man's production, which is not by spontaneous emergency, but in way of successive derivation, according to a method admirably provided for by nature. 3. Because if ever man did spring up of himself, it should be reasonable that at any time, that often, that at least sometime in so long a course of times, the like should happen, which yet no experience doth attest. 4. There is an evident relation between our bodies and souls; the members and organs of our bodies being wonderfully adapted to serve the operations of our souls. Now in our bodies (as we have before showed) there appeared plain arguments of a most wise Author that contrived and framed them; therefore in no likelihood did our souls arise of themselves, but owe their being to the same wise Cause.

Also particularly, that not any men did at some beginning of time spring up of themselves, is evident, because there is even in the thing itself a repugnance; and it is altogether unconceivable that any thing, which once hath not been, should ever come to be, without receiving its being from another; and supposing such a rise of any thing, there could not in any case be any need of an efficient cause; since any thing might purely out of nothing come to be of itself.

Neither could any man so exist from eternity, both from the general reasons assigned, which being grounded in the nature of the thing, and including no respect to this circumstance of now and then, do equally remove this supposition, (for what is in itself unapt or unnecessary or improbable to be now, was always alike so; the being from eternity or in time not altering the nature of the thing;) and also particularly, because there are no footsteps or monuments of man's (not to say eternal, but even) ancient standing in the world; but rather many good arguments (otherwhere touched) of his late coming thereinto; which consideration did even convince Epicurus and his followers, and made them acknowledge man to be a novel production. I add, seeing it is necessary to suppose some eternal and self-subsistent Being distinct from man, and from any other particular sensible being (for there is no such being, which in reason can be supposed author of the rest; but rather all of them bear characters signifying their original from a Being more excellent than themselves;) and such an one being admitted, there is no need or reason to suppose any other (especially man and all others appearing unapt so to subsist), therefore it is not reasonable to ascribe eternal self-subsistence to man. This discourse I confirm with the suffrage of Aristotle himself; who in his Physics hath these words: *In natural things, that which is definite and better, if possible, must rather exist: but it suffices that one, the first of things immoveable, being eternal, should be to others the original of motion;** (I subjoin, and by parity of reason it is sufficient, that one and the best thing be eternally subsistent of itself, and the cause of subsistence to the rest.)

As for the last supposition, that there have been indeterminate successions of men, without beginning, it is also liable to most of the former exceptions, beside that it is altogether unintelligible, and its having this peculiar difficulty in it, that it ascribes determinate effects to causes indeterminate. And indeed it hath been to no other purpose introduced, than to evade the arguments arising from the nature of the thing, by confounding the matter with impertinent intrigues, such as the terms of infinite and indeterminate must necessarily produce in man's shallow understanding. I therefore, upon such grounds, assume it as a reasonable supposition, that man's nature is nowise *αὐτοφυής*,† but hath proceeded from some cause.

2. I adjoin, secondly, that it could not come from any sensible or material cause, nor from any complication of such causes; for that the properties, the powers, the operations of man's soul, are wholly different from in kind, highly el-

* Ἐν γὰρ τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ πεπερασμένον, καὶ τὸ βέλτιστον, ἐὰν ἐνδέχηται, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον· ἱκανὸν δὲ καὶ εἰ ἕν, τὸ πρῶτον τῶν ἀκινήτων ἀΐδιον ὄν, ἔσται τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀρχὴ κινήσεως.—Phys. viii. 7.

† (hath not sprung up of itself.)

evated in worth, above all the properties, powers, and operations of things corporeal, in what imaginable manner soever framed or tempered: the properties, faculties, and operations of our souls, are, or refer to, several sorts or ways of knowledge (sense, fancy, memory, discourse, mental intuition;) of willing (that is, of appetite toward and choice of good, or of disliking and refusing evil;) of passion (that is, of sensible complacency or displeasure in respect to good and evil apprehended under several notions and circumstances; of αὐτοκινησία, or self-moving (the power and act of moving without any force extrinsical working upon it.) The general properties of things corporeal are, extension according to several dimensions and figures; aptness to receive motion from, or to impart motion unto, each other in several degrees and proportions of velocity; to divide and unite, or to be divided and united each by other; and the like, coherent with and resulting from those. Now to common sense it seems evident, that those properties and these are *toto genere* different from each other; nor have any conceivable similitude unto, connection with, dependence upon, each other, as to their immediate nature. Let any part of this corporeal mass be refined by the subtlest division, let it be agitated by the quickest motion, let it be modelled into what shape or fashion you please; how can any man imagine either knowledge or appetite or passion thence to result? or that it should thence acquire a power of moving itself, or another adjacent body? Even, I say, this inferior locomotive faculty is too high for matter, by any change it can undergo, to obtain: for we (as inward experience, or conscience of what we do, may teach us) determine ourselves commonly to action, and move the corporeal instruments subject to our will and command, not by force of any precedent bodily impression or impulse, but either according to mere pleasure, or in virtue of somewhat spiritual and abstracted from matter, acting upon us, not by a physical energy, but by a moral representation, in a manner more easily conceived than expressed; (for no man surely is so dull, that he cannot perceive a huge difference between being dragged by a violent hand, and drawn to action by a strong reason; although it may puzzle him to express that difference:) such a proposition of truth, such an apprehension of events possible, such an appearance of good or evil consequent (things nowhere existent without us, nor having in them any thing of corporeal subsistence; nor therefore capable of corporeal operation), are all the engines that usually impel us to action; and these, by a voluntary application of our minds (by collecting and digesting, severing and rejecting, sifting and moulding, the present single representations of things, by an immediate interior power, independent from any thing without us), we frame within ourselves. And even such a self-moving or self-determining power we cannot anywise conceive to be in, or to arise from, any part of this corporeal mass, however shaped or sized, however situated or agitated: much less can we well apprehend the more noble faculties to be seated in or to spring from it; of them the grossest and the finest, the slowest and the nimblest, the roughest and the smoothest bodies are alike capable, or rather unlike, uncapable. To think a gross body may be ground and pounded into rationality, a slow body may be thumped and driven into passion, a rough body may be filed and polished into a faculty of discerning and resenting things; that a cluster of pretty thin round atoms[r] (as Democritus forsooth conceited), that a well mixed combination of elements (as Empedocles fancied), that a harmonious contemperation (or crasis) of humours (as Galen, dreaming it seems upon his drugs and his potions, would persuade us), that an implement made up of I know not what fine springs, and wheels, and such mechanic knacks (as some of our modern wizards have been busy in divining), should, without more to do, become the subject of so rare capacities and endowments, the author of actions so worthy, and works so wonderful; capable of wisdom and virtue, of knowledge so vast, and of desires so lofty; apt to contemplate truth, and affect good; able to recollect things past, and to foresee things future; to search so deep into the causes of things, and disclose so many myste-

[r] Arist. de An. i. 2.

ries of nature; to invent so many arts and sciences, to contrive such projects of policy, and achieve such feats of prowess; briefly, should become capable to design, undertake, and perform all those admirable effects of human wit and industry which we daily see and hear of; how senseless and absurd conceits are these! how can we, without great indignation and regret, entertain such suppositions! No, no; it is both ridiculous fondness and monstrous baseness for us to own any parentage from, or any alliance to, things so mean, so very much below us. It is indeed observable, that no man can well, or scarce any man hath disowned the receiving his being from God, but hath also in a manner disavowed his own being what he is; that no man, denying God, hath not also withal denied himself; denied himself to be a man; renounced his reason, his liberty, and other perfections of his nature; rather than acknowledge himself so well descended, hath been ready to confess himself no more than a beast, yea much less than probably beasts are; a mere corporeal machine, a ball of fate and chance, a thing violently tossed and tumbled up and down by bodies all about it. But let these degenerate men vilify their own nature, and disparage themselves as they please, yet those noble perfections of our soul speak its extraction from a higher stock; we cannot, if we consider them well, but acknowledge that,

Mentem e cœlesti demissam traximus arce;

or, as Epicharmus said of old, that *man's reason did sprout from the Divine reason;** they plainly discover their original to be from a cause itself understanding and knowing, willing freely, resenting things (if I may so speak), and moving of itself in a more excellent manner and degree.

And indeed it is very considerable to our purpose, that while we assert the existence of God, we assert no other thing to be, than such as whereof we can assign a manifest instance or example, as it were, although in degree much inferior; for what can in any degree exist, it is not hard to conceive that possible to exist in any degree, how high soever; what is in kind possible, is in any perfection of degree possible; yea, what we see in a lower degree somewhere to exist, doth probably otherwhere exist in higher perfection. There is therefore scarce any attribute commonly ascribed to God, the existence whereof we cannot show possible, yea very credible, by showing some degree (I use this word in a large and popular sense, not regarding scholastical nicety), some participation, some semblance (or, if you please, some shadow) thereof discernible in man; he being indeed a small picture, as it were, wherein God hath drawn and represented himself, giving us to read that of himself in this small volume, which in its proper character and size we could never be able to apprehend; each letter, each line of his excellency, being in itself too large for our eye perfectly to view and comprehend.

3. We are, I say, not only God's works, but his children; our souls bearing in their countenance and complexion divers express features of him; especially as at first they were made, and as by improvement of our capacities they may again become. In the substance of man's soul, in its union with things corporeal, in its properties and powers, we may observe divers such resemblances, declaring it in a manner to be what Seneca did say of it, *a little God harboured in human body.*† For as God (*inhabiting light inaccessible*) being himself invisible, and subject to no sense, discovers himself by manifold effects of wisdom and power; so doth our soul, itself immediately exposed to no sense, show itself by many works of art and industry, wherein she imitates nature and the works of God; although her works in fineness and greatness do indeed come infinitely short of his.*

* Ὁ γὶ δὲ τ' ἀνθρώπου λόγος πέφυκ' ἀπὸ τοῦ θείου λόγου.—Epict. Clem. Alex. Ser. v. page 441.

† Deus in humano corpore hospitans.

* —— quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est et mundus in ipsis,
Exemplumque Dei quisque est in imagine parva?
Manil. 4.

Trismeg. χ'.—Διὸ τολμητέον ἐστὶν, τὸν μὲν ἄνθρωπον ἐπίγειον, εἶναι θεὸν θνητόν· τὸν δὲ οὐράνιον εἶναι θεὸν, ἀθάνατον ἄνθρωπον.

Quem in hoc mundo locum Deus obtinet, hunc in homine animus; quod est illuc materia, id in nobis corpus est.—*Sen. Ep.* 65.

Deum te scito esse: siquidem Deus est, qui viget, qui sentit, qui meminit, qui providet, qui tam regit, et movet, et moderatur id corpus, cui præpositus est, quam hunc mundum princeps ille Deus; et ut ipsum mundum ex quadam parte mortalem Deus æternus, sic fragile cor-

As God by his presence and influence doth, as the philosopher speaks, *contain and keep together the whole frame of things*, so that he withdrawing them, it would fall of itself into corruption and ruin; so doth the soul, by its union and sacret energy upon the body, connect the parts of its body, and preserve it from dissolution, which presently, they being removed, doth follow.*

As he, in a manner beyond our conception, without any proper extension or composition of parts, doth coexist with, penetrateth, and passeth through all things; so is she, in a manner also unconceivable, every where present within her bounds, and penetrates all the dimensions of her little world.†

As he incomprehensibly, by a word of his mind, or by a mere act of will, doth move the whole frame or any part of nature; so doth she, we cannot tell how, by thinking only, and by willing, wield her body, and determine any member thereof to motion.

As he, not confined by the extension or duration of things, doth at one simple view behold all things, not only present, but past and future, yea, whenever, wherever, however possible: so doth she, making wide excursions out of her narrow mansion, in an instant, as it were, or with marvelous agility, transcend any fixed bounds of time or place; surveys in her thought the most remote regions, stopping nowhere, and passing over the world's bounds into spaces void and imaginary; reviews ages long since past, and looks forward into those long after to come; sees things in their causes, and, as it were, beyond them, even the possibilities of things that never shall be.‡

As he performs nothing rashly or vainly, but always with wisest design to the best end; so doth* she never set herself on action without some drift, or aim, at good apparent to her.

As he, among all the agitations and changes of things without him, abides himself immoveable, impassible, and immutable;† so is she, immediately, at least, not disturbed, not altered, not affected by the various motions that surround her; they do not touch her, they cannot stir her; among the many tumults and tempests blustering all about her, she can retain a steady calm and rest: (Aristotle himself concluded her to be unmoveable, impassible, unmixed, and uncompounded.‡) So fair characters are there of the Divine nature engraven upon man's soul: but one chief property thereof we have not as yet touched; whereof, alas! the lineaments are more faint and less discernible; they being in themselves originally most tender and delicate, and thence apt by our unhappy degeneration to suffer the most, and have thence accordingly been most defaced; goodness I mean; whereof yet, I shall not doubt to say, many goodly relics are extant, and may be observed therein. There do remain, dispersed in the soil of human nature, divers seeds of goodness, of benignity, of ingenuity, which being cherished, excited, and quickened by good culture, do, to common experience, thrust out flowers very lovely, yield fruits very pleasant of virtue and goodness. We see that even the generality of men are prone to approve the laws and rules directing to justice, sincerity, and beneficence; to commend actions suitable unto them, to honour persons practising according to them; as also to distaste, detest, or despise such men, whose principles or tempers incline them to the practice of injury, fraud, malice, and cruelty;‖ yea, even them men generally are

pus animus sempiternus movet.—*Cic. in Somn. Scip.*

* Περιέχει πᾶσαν φύσιν.—Arist. de Mundo.

Δοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ τὸ ψῶμα συνέχειν· ἐξελθούσης οὖν διαπνείται καὶ σήπεται.—Arist. de An. i. 9.

† Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῖς τῆς διανοίας κινήμασι πάσῃ κατ' ἐξουσίαν ἐφαπλοῦται τῇ κτίσει, καὶ μέχρις οὐρανῶν ἀνιοῦσα, καὶ τῶν ἀδύσσων ἐπιβατεύουσα, καὶ τῷ πλάτει τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐπερχομένη, &c.—Greg. Nyss. Cat. c. 10.

‡ Magna et generosa res est humanus animus, in immensum se extendit, nec ullos sibi poni nisi communes cum Deo terminos patitur. —*Sen. Ep.* 102.

Πῶς μετρῇ τόπῳ, καὶ νοῦς οὐ χωρίζεται, ἀλλ' ἐν ταυτῷ μένων πάντα ἐπέρχεται; Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

* Ὁ Θεὸς οὐδὲν μάτην ποιεῖ.—Arist.

† Τάξας λογικοῦ καὶ ἀλόγου κράματος τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ζῶον λογικὸν συνεστήσατο, καὶ συνέδησε μυστικῶς τε καὶ ἀρρήτως τὸν χοῦν τῷ νοῖ, καὶ τὸν νοῦν τῷ πνεύματι.—Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

‡ Ἕν τι τῶν δύνατον τὸ ὑπάρχειν αὐτῇ κίνησιν. de An. i. 3; ἀπαθής. de An. i. 5; iii. 5, 6, &c.; ἀμιγής, ἄπλους. iii. 6, &c.

‖ Quæ autem natio non comitatem, non benignitatem, non gratum animum, et beneficii memorem diligit? quæ superbos, quæ maleficos, quæ crudeles, quæ ingratos non aspernatur, non odit?—*Cic. de Leg.* i. page 305.

apt to dislike, who are so addicted to themselves as to be backward to do good to others. Yea no man can act according to those rules of justice and goodness without satisfaction of mind; no man can do against them without inward self-condemnation and regret (as St. Paul did observe for us.[c]) No man hardly is so savage, in whom the receiving kindnesses doth not beget a kindly sense, and an inclination (*en nomine*, for that cause barely) to return the like; which inclination cannot well be ascribed to any other principle than somewhat of ingenuity innate to man.*

All men, I suppose, feel in themselves (if at least not hardened by villainous custom) a disposition prompting them to commiserate, yea (even with some trouble and some damage to themselves) to succour and relieve them who are in want, pain, or any distress; even mere strangers, and such from whom they can expect no return of benefit or advantage to themselves.

Many examples occur, in experience and in history, of men, who, from dictates of common reason and natural inclinations (which in this case are not to be separated both arising from the same source of human nature), have been very apt freely and liberally to impart unto others somewhat of any good thing they possessed; to sacrifice their own ease, pleasure, profit, unto others' benefit; to undergo great pains and hazards for public good (the good of their family, of their friends, of their country, of mankind in general;†) and all this without any hope of recompense; except perhaps that commonly they might have some regard to the approbation and acceptance, to the good-will and gratitude of them whom their beneficence obliged; which in real esteem is no great derogation to their noble performances; and argues only, there is, together with such a laudable benignity or goodness of nature (to excite and enliven it), implanted a natural ambition also, or generosity in man's soul; which being well moderated seems not culpable; since God himself, in return to his most free beneficence, doth expect and require somewhat of thanks and praise; so much as we are able to render to him.

Yea (although our adversaries will scarce admit so much, for that not supposing any good original, they are unwilling to allow any good derivative; they are as ready to exclude all humanity as divinity; they have commonly, as no opinion of God, so no good opinion of men; feeling little good in themselves, they are willing to think less to be in others; so projecting to excuse themselves, and shroud their own particular faults under the covert of a general naughtiness), I doubt not to say there have been many persons in all ages full of very single and sincere good-will toward men, heartily desiring the public good, and compassionating the evils of mankind; ready with their best endeavours to procure and promote the one, to prevent and remove the other, from principles of mere ingenuity or pure nobleness; that with unmoveable resolution have persisted in courses tending to such ends, although in them they have encountered dangers, disgraces, and troubles from the ingrateful world, or rather from some men prevalent therein, their envy or spite.*

In fine, the wisest observers of man's nature have pronounced him to be a creature gentle and sociable,† inclinable to and fit for conversation, apt to keep good order, to observe rules of justice, to embrace any sort of virtue, if well managed, if instructed by good discipline, if guided by good example, if living under the influence of wise laws and virtuous governors. Fierceness, rudeness, craft, malice, all perverse and intractable, all mischievous and vicious dispositions, do grow among men (like weeds in any, even the best soil) and overspread the earth, from neglect of good education;

* Quid tam laudabile, quid tam æqualiter in omnium animos receptum, quam referre bene meritis gratiam?—*Sen. de Benef.* iv. 16.

Huic uni rei non posuimus legem, tanquam satis natura cavisset.—*Ibid.* iv. 17.

† Vicit amor patriæ, laudumque cupido.

[c] Rom. ii. 15.

* Nec est quisquam gentis ullius, qui ducem naturam nactus ad virtutem pervenire non possit.—*Cic. de Leg.* 1.——Natura nos ad mentem optimam genuit, adeoque discere meliora volentibus promptum est, ut vere intuenti mirum sit illud magis malos esse tam multos.—*Quintil.* xii. 11.

† Ζῶον ἥμερον. Ζῶον πολιτικόν.

from ill conduct, ill custom, ill example; (it is the comparison of St. Chrysostom and Plutarch.)* It is favour therefore, I conceive, to their own habitual depravations of nature (or perhaps to some prejudicate opinions) which hath induced some men to make so disadvantageous a portraiture of human nature, in which nothing lightsome or handsome, no lines of candour or rectitude, do appear; but all seems black and crooked; all is drawn over with dusky shades, and irregular features of base designfulness and malicious cunning; of suspicion, malignity, rapacity; which character, were it true (in that general extent, and not proper only to some monsters among men), we need not further seek for hell, since as many men, so many fiends, appear unto us. But so commodious living here; so many offices daily performed among men, of courtesy, mercy, and pity; so many constant observances of friendship and amity; so many instances of fidelity and gratitude; so much credit always (even among pagans and barbarians) preserved to justice and humanity (humanity, that very name doth fairly argue for us), do sufficiently confute those defamers and slanderers of mankind, do competently evidence, that all good inclinations are not quite banished the world, nor quite razed out of man's soul; but that even herein human nature doth somewhat resemble its excellent original, the nature divine.

Thus doth man's nature in its substance, as it were, its faculties, its manner of operation, resemble God: but we may further observe, that as children are indeed in complexion and feature usually born somewhat like to their parents, but grow daily more like unto them (those smaller lineaments continually with their bulk and stature increasing and becoming more discernible;) so is man improvable to more exact resemblance of God: his soul hath appetites and capacities, by which well guided and ordered it soars and climbs continually in its affection and desire toward Divine perfection. Man hath an insatiable curiosity and greediness of knowledge (*his eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor his ear filled with hearing;*[d]) he never rests content with, but in a manner despises the notions already acquired; always striving to enlarge and enrich his mind with intellectual treasure. So doth he tend nearer to Divine omniscience.

And as his searches after truth, so his desires of good, are in a manner boundless. No present, no definite good, can long detain his liking, or fully content him: he soon doth suck it dry, and leaves it insipid; then longs and hunts after fresh entertainments: he seems poor to himself in the greatest plenty, and straitened in the most ample condition. In short, he ever aspires to somewhat more great and high than what he enjoys; finding in himself a kind of infinite (at least indefinite) ambition and covetousness, a restless tendency after further degrees of joy and happiness, so doth he shoot himself on toward that highest mark of Divine felicity.

Being sensible of his own mortal and transitory condition, he yet seeks to live for ever in his name and memory, labours to perform memorable actions, rears lasting monuments of his art and knowledge, of his wealth and power, of his bounty and munificence, by all means studying and striving to commend himself to the regard of posterity; thus affects he another sort of likeness unto God, even a kind of immortality and eternity.

If also, being through Divine grace awakened out of that drowsy state (which naturally in great measure hath seized upon all men), he discovereth his moral or spiritual wants and imperfections; he is then apt to breathe and endeavour a nearer similitude to God, even in goodness, righteousness, and purity; to labour in getting continually his inclinations more rectified, and his passions better composed; in restraining, subduing, destroying inordinate self-love, with the sensuality, the perverseness, the pride, the

* Chrysost. tom. v. page 613.—Καθάπερ ἡ γῆ, ὅταν λιπαρὰ καὶ πίων οὖσα τυγχάνῃ μὴ γεωργῆται δὲ, πυλλὴν ἐπιδείκνυται τῶν ἀκανθῶν τὴν φορὰν, οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡ ἡμετέρα καλὴ οὖσα διὰ τὸν παραγαγόντα, καὶ πρὸς τὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς καρπὸν ἐπιτηδείως ἔχουσα, &c.

Plut. de sera Num. Vind. page 978.—Εἰδὼς ὅσην μοῖραν ἀρετῆς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ φερόμεναι πρὸς γένεσιν ψυχαὶ βαδίζουσι, καὶ τὸ γενναῖον ὡς ἰσχυρὸν αὐτὰς, καὶ οὐκ ἐξίτηλον ἐπέφυκεν· ἐξανθεῖ δὲ παρὰ φύσιν τὴν κακίαν ὑπὸ τροφῆς, καὶ ὁμιλίας φαύλης φθειρόμενον, &c.

[d] Eccles. i. 8.

malice, growing from that evil root; in promoting all virtuous desires and affections, especially reverence toward God his father, and charity toward man his brother; neither then can he be at ease, or well content, till he arrive in such dispositions of mind to that nearness of perfection which his capacities do admit. And a man thus qualified in degree, thus tending in desire toward higher perfection in goodness, is indeed the most lively image that can be framed of God; being, as St. Paul expresseth it, *renewed to an acknowledgment* (or better understanding of himself, of his Maker, of true goodness) *according to the image of him that made him.*[e] I might also propound to your consideration (that φίλτρον φυσικὸν τὸ πρὸς τὸν Κτίσαντα, as one of our Fathers doth call it), that *natural proclivity observable in man to acknowledge and worship God;** to embrace religion both in opinion and practice, and especially on all occasions of need or distress to have recourse unto him, as an argument of his relation to God. It is, we see, common in nature for all creatures to be readily acquainted with their parents, to run after them, to expect from them supply of wants, succour in straits, refuge and defence in dangers; from hence we may easily discern to what parent any child belongs: and since there appears the like instinct and capacity innate to man (and indeed to him alone, whence some philosophers thought good from this property to define man a creature capable of religion;†) since he is apt to entertain notions of God, to bear in his mind awe and respect toward him; since he is ready in all his straits (when other helps and hopes fail him) to lift up his heart and voice toward heaven for assistance; why may we not in like manner hence discern, and with like reason infer, that man is also in especial manner God's child and offspring?

I might also adjoin, that the very power of framing conceptions, although imperfect and inadequate, concerning God, is in itself a faculty so very spiritual and sublime, that it argues something divine in man's soul. *That like is known by its like,** was an axiom among ancient philosophers; and that *spiritual things are spiritually discerned,*[f] is the rule of a better master in wisdom than they; and beasts surely, because not endued with reason, have no conceptions concerning man's nature or the matters proper to him (according to what rules, by what methods, to what purposes, he doth act;) so in likelihood should we not be able to apprehend and discourse about things appertaining to God, his nature, the methods and reasons of his proceedings; the notions of eternal truth, the indispensable laws of right, the natural differences of good and evil, with such like high objects of thought, except our souls had in them some sparks of Divine understanding; some cognation with, and communication from, Heaven.

I shall to these only subjoin one further consideration worth attending to; that the wisest and most considerate men, in several times, only by reflecting upon their own minds, and observing in them what was most lovely and excellent, most pure and straight, have fallen upon, and conspired in, notions concerning God, very suitable to those which we believe taught us by revelation; although contrary to the prejudices of their education, and to popular conceits: many admirable passages to this purpose we may find dropped from the mouth of Socrates and the pen of Plato; in Cicero, in Epictetus, yea, in the least credulous or fanciful of men, Aristotle himself. Whence plainly enough we may collect how near affinity there is between God and us; how legible characters of the Divinity are written upon our souls; how easily we may know God, if we be not ignorant of ourselves; that we need not go far to fetch arguments to prove that God is, nor to find lessons to learn what he is; since we always carry both about us, or rather within us; since our souls could indeed come from no other than such a Being, whom they so resemble and represent.

* Orig in Cels. Testimonium animæ naturaliter religiosæ.—*Tertull.*

† Animal religionis capax.

Animus—hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ, quod illum divina delectant.—*Sen. Nat.* quæst. 1, præf.

[e] εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν,—Coloss. iii. 10.

* Arist. de An. i. 2,—γινώσκεσθαι ὁμοίῳ ὁμοιον·

Quis cœlum possit nisi cœli munere nosse,
Et reperire Deum nisi qui pars ipse deorum est?
Manil. lib. 2.

[f] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

I have indulged my thoughts somewhat freely in this speculation, yet I hope not altogether impertinently, for that, (as I before alleged) in the chief of God's works (observable by us) we may reasonably suppose that his glory doth chiefly shine; and will therefore be most discernible to us, if we open our eyes and apply our minds thereto.

II. Thus doth human nature, being in each singular man, show the existence of God, as its original author and pattern; considering also men as related and combined together in society, some glimpse of a Divine power and wisdom ordering them toward it, and preserving them in it, may be perceived. As in the world natural, the parts thereof are so fitted in varieties of size, of quality, of aptitude to motion, that all may stick together (excluding chasms and vacuities), and all cooperate incessantly to the preservation of that common union and harmony which was there intended; so in the world political we may observe various propensions and aptitudes disposing men to collection and coherence and co-operation in society. They are apt to flock together, not only from a kind of necessity, discovered by reason, for mutual help and defence; but from a natural love to company and conversation, with an aptness to delight therein, and from an inbred aversation to that solitude; wherein many great appetites natural to man must needs be stifled. They are also marvellously fitted to maintain intercourse not only by the principal guide thereof, reason, but by that great instrument of it, speech; whereby men impart, and as it were transfuse into one another, their inmost thoughts; which faculty doth evidently relate unto, and plainly shows men naturally designed for, society. In order thereto, men are also endued with several subordinate inclinations and qualifications (arising from different temper of body, or disposition of mind) requisite to cement society, and preserve it for a competent durance in peace and order; some few being made very sagacious and provident, and thence fit to direct others; very quick and active, thence able to execute; others of a high spirit and courage, thence affecting and disposed to command; most others being dull in conceit, or heavy of temper, or of a soft spirit, and thence apt to follow, content to rest in mean state, willing to obey. All these things being so ordered, that even contrarieties of humour in men do serve to settle them in their due place and posture; to beget and preserve a peaceful union, and a decent harmony of action in society; which, supposing all men in ability and inclination more like or equal (able to do, apt to affect the same things), could hardly be; for then all men would be competitors and strugglers for the same thing, and so none would easily obtain or peacefully enjoy it.

Now since it is plainly best for man to live thus in society, many great benefits thence accruing to him (security to his life, safe enjoying the fruits of his industry, much ease by mutual assistance, much delight in conversation; all that civil people enjoy of convenience beyond barbarians and savages, or indeed above beasts), that men are so disposed and suited thereto, is an argument of mighty wisdom and great goodness in that cause from whence all this proceeded; and such a cause is God.

Thus from the constitution of societies we may collect a provident care over human affairs; the same also may be reasonably deduced from the preservation of them; for although man be inclined unto and fitted for society, yet being an agent very free and loose is his actions (acting contingently, and without necessary subjection to any settled law or rule, as do other things in nature), no ordinary banks will constantly retain him in due place and order; so that the course of affairs, perverted by some men's irregular wills and passions, would run into great confusion, did not a wise care also continually govern things, seasonably interposing its hand, and thereby upholding, retaining, establishing them in order, or reducing them thereinto; did not a superintendent power restrain the fierceness of tyrants, the ambition of grandees, the greediness of oppressors, the wildness and precipitancy of factious multitudes; did not God sometime *break the arm of the wicked;* or as Job speaks, *pour contempt upon princes*, and *weaken the strength of the mighty;* if he, that *stilleth the noise of seas*, did not also *repress the tumults*

of the people.[g] Indeed, as in nature it is wisely provided that tigers, wolves, and foxes upon the earth, that kites in the air, and sharks in the sea, shall not so multiply and abound, but that many tame and gentle creatures shall abide there by them; so among men, that (among divers fierce, ravenous, crafty, and mischievous men) so many poor, simple, and harmless people do make a shift to live here in competent safety, liberty, ease, and comfort, doth argue his especial overwatching care and governance, who (as we are, in conformity to experience, taught by sacred scripture) hath an especial regard unto the poor and unto the meek; providing for them, and protecting them.[h]

I might subjoin those significations of Providence, which the general connection of mankind doth afford; things being so ordered, that several nations and societies shall be prompted, by need or by advantage mutual, to maintain correspondence and commerce with each other; under common laws and compacts, that so there should become a kind of union and harmony even among the several parts and elements, as it were, of the human world. I might consider the benefit that arises (as in the natural world from contrary qualities and motions, so) in the human world even from wars and contentions; how these rouse men from sloth, brush away divers vices, ferment and purge things into a better condition: but I will not strive to be so minute and subtile.

Here I shall conclude these sorts of argumentation, inferring the existence of God from the common effects obvious to our sense and experience, either in the greater world of nature, or lesser world of man; by which God doth continually, in a still, though very audible voice, whisper this great truth into our ears. There be other sort of effects, more rare and extraordinary, which go above or against both those streams of natural and human things, whereby God doth more loudly, as it were, and expressly proclaim his being and providence; the consideration of which I shall reserve to another time.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[g] Psal. xxxvii. 17; x. 15; Job xii. 21; xxxviii. 15; Psal. cvii. 40; lxxv. 7.

[h] Psal. cxlvi. 7; cvii. 41; ix. 9; x. 14; xxxvii. 18.

I Believe in God.

SERMON VIII.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM UNIVERSAL CONSENT.

PSALM xix. 3, 4.—*There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard: their line* (or rather, according to the LXX,* their voice) *is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*

THE Psalmist doth in this place observe and affirm (very plainly) the universality of religion: that all nations did conspire in acknowledging a Divinity, and describing thereto the framing and conservation of the heavens. He supposes the heavens to speak an universal language, heard and understood by all people, therein glorifying God and declaring him their maker.

Upon which supposition I purpose now to ground an argument, to prove (that which formerly by several other kinds of discourse I have endeavoured to evince) that great fundamental truth concerning the existence of God, that is, of one incomprehensibly excellent Being, the Maker and Governor of all things.

The argument (to be short) is that (as Lactantius speaks) *universal and unanimous testimony of people and nations,* through all courses of time, *who* (otherwise differing in language, custom, and conceit) *only have agreed in this one matter of opinion.*† This testimony, in itself simply taken, hath indeed (according to the rules of reason and judgments

* Who read קולם instead of קום.

† Testimonium populorum atque gentium in una hac re non diffidentium.—*Lact.* i. 2.

of wise men) no small force; but seems to have much greater, if we consider the source, whatever that could be, whence it was derived. As to the thing absolutely taken, Aristotle thus ranks the degrees of probability: what seems true to some wise men, is somewhat probable; what seems to the most or to all wise men, is very probable; what most men, both wise and unwise, assent unto, doth still more resemble truth; but what men generally consent in hath the highest probability, and approaches near to demonstrable truth; so near, that it may pass for ridiculous arrogance and self-conceitedness, or for intolerable obstinacy and perverseness, to deny it. *A man* (saith the philosopher) *may assume what seems true to the wise, if it do not contradict the common opinion of men;** no one man's wisdom (he supposes) sufficient to balance the general athority of men. Indeed, when extravagant wits, and pretenders to wisdom (or to an extraordinary reach in knowledge), shall assert things evidently repugnant to sense or reason; that snow and coal have the like appearance (as did Anaxagoras;) that all motion is impossible (as Zeno;) that contradictory propositions may be consistent (as Heraclitus;) we may add to those instances, that all things in nature proceeded from chance (as Epicurus and his followers;) what other means have we (since no principles can be more evident than such propositions as they reject) to confute them, or to decide the cause, than making appeal to the common sentiments of mankind? which if they decline, what have we more to do than to laugh at or pity them? However, surely, he needs to have a very strong and very clear reason to show, who dares to withstand the common suffrage of mankind, and to challenge all the world of mistake. Now, somewhat to enforce this discourse, but more to evidence the matter of fact upon which it is grounded, and withal to make good that confirmation thereof, which was intimated; I shall allege some few testimonies of ancient philosophers (that is, of witnesses in this cause most impartial and unsuspected), selected out of innumerable others extant and obvious, serving to the same purpose. *We are wont to attribute much* (saith Senaca) *to what all men presume; it is an argument with us of truth, that any thing seems true to all; as that there be Gods, we hence collect, for that all men have engrafted in them an opinion concerning Gods; neither is there any nation so void of laws, or good manners, that it doth not believe there are some Gods;** so doth he assert the matter of fact, and argue from it. The like doth Cicero in many places, sometimes in the person of his dialogists, sometimes according to his own sense; pressing this argument as very weighty: *This* (saith he, in his Tusculan Questions) *seems a most firm thing, which is alleged, why we should believe Gods to be, because no nation is so fierce, no man so wild, whose mind an opinion concerning Gods hath not imbued: many think amiss concerning Gods, for that uses to proceed from bad custom, but all do however conceive a Divine power and nature to exist—Now in all things the consent of all nations is to be supposed a law of nature.*† We shall have other occasion to cite divers places out of Plato and Aristotle, confirming the same thing; I shall now only add these pregnant words of Maximus Tyrius: *In such a quarrelling, and tumult, jangling* (about other matters of opinion), *you may see this one by common accord acknowledged law and speech, that there is one God, the King and Father of all; and many gods, the children of God, and ruling together with him: this the Greek says, and this the Barbarian says; the inhabiter of the continent, and the islander; the wise and the unwise do say the same.*‡

* Θείη δ' ἂν τις τὸδοκοῦν τοῖς σοφοῖς, ἐὰν μὴ ἐναντίον ταῖς τῶν πολλῶν δόξαις ᾖ.—Top. i. 8.

* Multum dare solemus præsumptioni omnium hominum, apud nos veritatis argumentum est aliquid omnibus videri; tanquam Deos esse sic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio insita est; nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moresque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat.—*Sen. Epist.* cxvii. *vide de Benef.* iv. 4.

† Firmissimum hoc afferri videtur cur Deos esse credamus, quod nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit Deorum opinio. Multi de Diis prava sentiunt (id enim vitioso more effici solet;) omnes tamen esse vim, et naturam divinam arbitrantur.—Omni autem in re consensio omnium gentium lex naturæ putanda est.—*Tusc.* i. p. 299; *vide* de Nat. Deor. i. page 22, et ii. page 53, 57, &c.

‡ Ἐν τοσούτῳ δὲ πολέμῳ καὶ στάσει καὶ διαφωνίᾳ ἕνα ἴδοις ἂν ἐν πάσῃ γῇ ὁμόφωνον νόμον καὶ λόγον, ὅτι

Thus it appears, by testimony abundantly sufficient (to which also all histories ancient and modern do agree), that our conclusion hath been the catholic and current doctrine of all times and of all places; so that who denies assent thereto, is beyond measure paradoxical, and belongs to a sect very thin and weak; is in opinion *what a monster is in nature*, a thing extraordinary and uncouth; *as a lion without courage, an ox without horns, a bird without wings* (as the philosopher speaks;) a thing which seldom haps to be, and that never without some great error or defect.*

But if, as surely he will, our haughty adversary shall refuse the verdict of this grand jury, we may assert its authority, not only as competent in itself, but as more considerable in respect to the causes whence it proceeded, or from the manner by which this general consent can be conceived to have been produced and propagated among men. That men should thus conspire in opinion must needs proceed either, 1. from hence, that such an opinion was by way of natural light or instinct (as the first most evident principles of science are conceived to be, or as the most effectual propensions toward good are) implanted in man's nature: thus Cicero and other philosophers suppose it to have come. In him it is thus said, and argued: *Since not by any institution, or custom, or law, this opinion is established, and among all, without exception, a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; we having implanted, or rather inbred, notions concerning them; but about whatever men naturally do agree, that must needs be true: we must therefore confess there are Gods.*† Thus doth he draw this opinion from original light of nature. Or, 2. it may come from a common inclination in man's soul, naturally disposing every man to entertain this opinion, whenever it is propounded, as there is in our eyes a natural readiness to perceive the light, whenever it shines before us; thus others explain the rise thereof, as Julian particularly: *We all* (saith he) *without being taught* (without any painful or long instruction), *are persuaded that a Divinity exists; and to regard it, and to have, we may suppose, a speedy tendency* (or recourse) *thereto; being in such manner disposed thereto in our souls, as things endued with the faculty of seeing are to the light:** the same similitude is, as I remember, used by Plato to the same purpose. Or, 3. it may come hence, that some very prevalent reason (obvious to all men, even to the most rude and barbarous, and flowing from common principles or notions of truth) did beget this agreement in them: thus Plutarch derives it from men's common observation of the stars' constant order and motion;[a] so St. Paul also seems to imply the knowledge of God manifest to all men from the creation of the world, and the works of God visible therein;[b] and here (in this 19th Psalm) the prophet may seem to intend the same, although it be not certain he does; for that general acknowledgment and glorifying of God as maker of the heavens, which he avouches, may be understood as well the consequence as the cause of this religious opinion. Or, 4. it might from some common fountain of instruction (from one ancient master, or one primitive tradition) be conveyed, as from one common head or source, into many particular conduits. Thus the author of the book *de Mundo* (dedicated to Alexander) seems to deduce it: *It is an ancient saying* (says he) *and running in the race of all men, that from God are all*

Θεὸς εἷς πάντων βασιλεὺς καὶ πατήρ· καὶ θερὶ πολλοὶ, Θεοῦ παῖδες, συνάρχοντες Θεῷ, ταῦτα δὲ ὁ Ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ Βαρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἠπειρώτης, καί ὁ θαλάττιος, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς, καὶ ὁ ἄσοφος.—Diss. i. p. 5.

* Εἰ δὲ ἐξεγένοντο ἐν τῷ ξύμπαντι αἰῶνι δύο που καὶ τρεῖς ἄθεον καὶ ταπεινὸν καὶ ἀσθενὲς γένος· ὡς ἄθυμος λέων, ὡς βοῦς ἄκερος, ὡς ὄρνις ἄπτερος.—Id. 16.

Καί τις οὐκ ἂν ἐπῄνεσε τὴν τῶν βαρβάρων σοφίαν, εἴγε μηδεὶς αὐτῶν εἰς ἀθεότητα ἐξέπεσε, μηδὲ ἀμφιβάλλουσι περὶ θεῶν, ἄρα γε εἰσὶν, ἢ οὐκ εἰσὶν, καὶ ἄρα γε ἡμῶν φροντιζουσι, ἢ οὔ, &c.—Ælian. Var. ii. 31.

† Cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio constituta, maneatque ad unum omnium firma consensio, intelligi necesse est esse Deos, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus; de quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est. Esse igitur Deos confitendum est.—*De Nat. Deor.* i. page 22; *vide* ii. *De Nat. Deor.* 53, 57, &c.

* Πάντες ἀδιδάκτως εἶναι θεῖόν τι πεπείσμεθα, καὶ πρὸς τυῦτο ἀφορᾶν, ἐπ' αὐτό τε, οἶμαι, σπεύδειν· οὕτω διατιθέμενοι τὰς ψυχὰς πρὸς αὐτὸ, ὥσπερ οἶμαι πρὸς τὸ φῶς τὰ βλέποντα.—Jul. ad Heraclitum.

[a] Plut. de Plac. i. 6. [b] Rom. i. 19, 20.

*things, and by God all things were constituted, and do consist.** The like Aristotle himself implies in a notable place, which we shall afterward have occasion to produce.[c]

No other way beside one of these can we (following experience or reason) imagine, by which any opinion or practice should prevail generally among men, who otherwise are so apt to differ and dissent in judgment about things. And be it any one or more of these ways that this opinion became so universally instilled into men's minds, our argument will thereby gain weight and force: if we assign or acknowledge either of the two first ways, we do in effect yield the question; and grant it unreasonable to deny our conclusion: if nature forcibly drives men, or strongly draws men, into this persuasion (nature, which always we find in her notions and in her instincts very sincere and faithful, not only to ourselves, but to all other creatures), how vain an extravagancy will it then be to oppose it? Also, if we grant that plain reason, apparent to the generality of men, hath moved them to consent herein, do we not therefore, by dissenting from it, renounce common sense, and confess ourselves unreasonable? but if we say, that it did arise in the last manner, from a common instruction or primitive tradition (as indeed, to my seeming, from that chiefly, assisted by good reason, it most probably did arise), we shall thereby be driven to inquire, who that common master, or the author of such tradition, was: of any such we find no name recorded (as we do of them who have by plausible reasons or artifices drawn whole nations and sects of people to a belief of their doctrine;) we find no time when, no place where, no manner how, it began to grow or spread, as in other cases hath been wont to appear; what, then, can we otherwise reasonably deem, than that the first deliverers and teachers thereof were none other than the first parents of mankind itself, who, as they could not be ignorant of their own original, so could not but take care by ordinary education to convey the knowledge thereof to their children; whence it must needs insensibly spread itself over all posterities of men, being sucked in with their milk, being taught them together with their first rudiments of speech? Thus doth that consideration lead us to another, very advantageous to our purpose; that mankind hath proceeded from one common stock of one man or a few men gathered together; which doth upon a double score confirm our assertion: first, as proving the generations of men had a beginning; secondly, as affording us their most weighty authority for the doctrine we assert. For, 1. supposing mankind had a beginning upon this earth, whence could it proceed but from such a Being as we assert? who but such an one (so wise, powerful, and good) could or would form these bodies of ours so full of wonderful artifice? who should infuse those divine endowments (not only of life and sense, but) of understanding and reason? Aristotle, discoursing about the generation of animals, says, *If man* (or any other perfect animal) *were γηγενής, he must be necessarily produced, either as out of a worm, or as from an egg.** But is it not ridiculous to suppose him to arise in either of those manners? did we, did ever any one in any age, observe any such production of a man? yet, why if once it could be, should it not happen sometime, yea often again, in some part of the earth, in so many thousand years? what peculiar lucky temper of slime can we imagine to have been then, which not at sometime afterward, not somewhere, should appear again? Experience sufficiently declares, that more is required to so noble a production, that men no otherwise come into the world, than either from another man (fitted in a manner curious above our conception, with many organs most exquisitely suited to that purpose), or immediately from a cause incomprehensibly great and wise. And could we without fondness conceive man's body possibly might arise (like mice, as Diodorus Siculus tells us, out of the mud of Nilus) from earth and water fermented together, and organized by the sun's heat; yet

§ Ἀρχαῖος μὲν οὖν τις λόγος, καὶ πάτριός ἐστι πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὃς ἐκ Θεοῦ τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ Θεοῦ ἡμῖν συνέστηκεν.—Cap. 6.

[c] Metaph. xii. 8.

* De Gener. Anim. iii. cap. ult. Stoici putant homines in omnibus terris et agris generatos tanquam fungos.—*Lact.* vii. 4; *vide* Lips. Phys. Stoic. iii. 3.

(as more largely we have discoursed at another time) we cannot however well suppose his soul, that principle of operations so excellent (so much different from, so far elevated above all material motions), to spring up from dirty stuff, however baked or boiled by heat. I ask also (supposing still this notion derived from the first men), 2. who instilled even this notion into them? why they should conceive themselves to come from God, if they did not find it so; if he that made them did not sensibly discover himself to them, and show them, that to him they owed their being? In short, if they did testify and teach their posterity, that they came from God, we can have no reason to disbelieve them; nor can imagine more credible witnesses, or more reasonable instructors than themselves concerning their own original: it is a discourse, this, which we find even in Plato: *We must* (saith he) *yield credence to them who first avouched themselves the offspring of God, and did sure clearly know their own progenitors; it is indeed impossible to distrust the children of the Gods, although otherwise speaking without plausible or necessary demonstrations; but, following law, we must believe them, as testifying about matters peculiarly belonging to themselves.**

Thus do these two notions, that of general tradition concerning God, and that concerning man's origin upon earth from one stock, mutually support and defend each other.† And indeed, concerning the latter, there be divers other arguments of the same kind, although perhaps hardly any so clear and valid, confirming it; I mean divers common opinions, stories, and practices, of an unaccountable rise, which cannot be well deemed to have been introduced, and so universally diffused among men, otherwise than from this fountain. I think it worth the while to propound some instances thereof, of each kind.

Even this opinion, or story, itself, concerning mankind proceeding from one single or very narrow stock, was commonly received, and that from this head of tradition;[d] as also divers other concerning the nature and state of man. That God did form man and breathe his soul into him (as Aratus says, that *we are God's offspring*, and, as Cicero speaks, that *we have our souls drawn and dropped from the Divine nature*),* might be shown by innumerable testimonies to have been a general opinion; which although it have a very strong foundation in reason, yet it seems rather to have obtained by virtue of tradition.

That man was formed after the image of God, and doth much resemble him, was also a general opinion, as Aristotle himself observes;† and Ovid most expressly, according to what he found set down in ancient stories.‡

That man's soul is immortal, and destined to a future state of life, in joy or pain respectively, according to his merits or demerits in this life;[e] that there should accordingly pass severe scrutinies and judgments after death upon the actions of this life; that there were places provided of rest and pleasure for good men, of horror and misery for bad men departed; were opinions that did commonly possess men's minds; none of them, it seems, upon the force of any arguments having a common influence upon men's minds (such as philosophers did by speculation invent, being indeed too subtile for vulgar capacities to apprehend, and scarce able to persuade themselves), but rather from their education, continued through all times, and commencing from that head we speak of; as even such philosophers themselves confess: *We must* (says Plato) *believe the reports of this kind* (speaking about these matters), *being so many, and so very ancient:** and, *We suppose* (says Cicero)

* Πειστέον τοῦς εἰρηκόσιν ἔμπροσθεν, ἐκγόνοις μὲν θεῶν οὔσιν, ὡς ἔφασαν, σαφῶς δέ που τοὺς αὑτῶν προγόνους εἰδόσιν· ἀδύνατον οὖν θεῶν παισὶν ἀπιστεῖν, καίπερ ἄνευ τι εἰκότων καὶ ἀναγκαίων ἀποδείξεων λέγουσιν, ἀλλ' ὡς οἰκεῖα φάσκόυσιν ἀπαγγέλλειν, ἑπομένους τῷ νόμῳ πιστευτέον.—Tim. p. 1053.

† ——— quæ si singula vos forte non movent, universa certe inter se connexa, atque conjuncta movere debebunt.—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii

* A natura divina haustos animos et delibutos habemus.—*Cic. Divin.* 1.

† Ἀνθρωποειδεῖς θεοὺς, &c.—Metaph. xii. 8. Ὥσπερ δὲ πάντες καὶ τὰ εἴδη ἑαυτοῖς ἀφομοιοῦσι, οὕτω καὶ τοὺς βίουν τῶν θεῶν.—Polit. i. 1.

‡ Finxit ad effigiem.

‖ Πιστεύειν δὲ ταῖς ἄλλαις φήμαις χρεὼν περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, οὕτω πολλαῖς καὶ σφόδρα παλαιαῖς οὔσαις. —Plat. de Leg. 2; *vide* Gorg. sub fin.

[d] *Vide* Clem. Alex. Str. v. p. 401.

[e] Clem. Str. v. p. 442.

*that souls abide after death, from the consent of all nations.** And, *I cannot* (saith he again) *assent unto those, who have lately begun to discourse that souls do perish together with bodies, and that all things are blotted out by death: the authority of the ancients doth more prevail with me.*† And, *When* (saith Seneca) *we dispute concerning the eternity of souls, the consent of men either fearing or worshipping the Inferi* (that is, the state of things after death) *hath no slight moment with us.*‡ Even Celsus himself (an Epicurean philosopher, and great enemy of our faith) confesses, that *divine men had delivered it, that happy souls should enjoy a happy life hereafter.*§

The opinion concerning man having sometimes been in a better state (both in regard to complexion of mind, and outward accommodations of life), but that he did by his wilful miscarriages fall thence into this wretched condition of proneness to sin, and subjection to sorrow, was an ancient doctrine‖ (if we take Plato's word;) and concerning it Cicero hath these remarkable words: *From which errors and miseries of human life, we may* (saith he) *conclude, that sometime those ancient prophets, or interpreters of the Divine mind in the delivery of holy mysteries, who have said that we are born to undergo punishments for the faults committed in a former life, may seem to have understood somewhat.*¶—(It is true, these authors assign this fall to the souls of singular persons in a state of pre-existence; but it is plain enough how easy it might be so to mistake and transform the story.) To the same head may be referred that current story concerning the golden age, in which men first did live so happily without care and pain; which so livelily expresses man's condition in paradise. As also thereto may belong that relation concerning man's being thrown into this miserable state, because of a rapine committed against God's will, and that by the means of a woman sent down; who *with her hands opened the lid of a great vessel* (fraught with mischiefs), *and thence dispersed sad disasters and sorrows among men;* as Hesiod expresseth it, in words very applicable to the fact of our mother Eve, and the event following it.*

I do not know also whether what Plato[f] says concerning man's being at first ἀνδρόγυνος (of both sexes), and being afterward cleaved into two, was borrowed from tradition, or devised from his own fancy; it surely well comports with the sacred history concerning woman being taken out of man. That there are two prime causes, or principles, one of good things, the other of bad, was the ancient doctrine among all the ancient nations; of the Persians (who called one of them Oromasdes, the other Arimanius;) of the Egyptians (who had their Osiris and Typhon;) of the Chaldeans (who had their good and bad planets;) of the Greeks (who had their good and bad dæmon, their Ζεὺς and Ἅιδης); we have reported by Plutarch in his tract *De Iside et Osiride*, by Laertius in his Proœme, and others (*Aug. de Civ. Dei*, v. 21,) which conceits seem derived from the ancient traditions concerning *God* the author of all good, and *Satan* the tempter to all evil, and the minister of Divine vengeance; (Plutarch expressly says the good principle was called *God*, the bad one, *Dæmon.*) Indeed there were many other relations concerning matters of fact, or pieces of ancient story, agreeing with the sacred writings, which did among the ancient people pass commonly, although somewhat disguised by alterations incident from time and other causes; which seem best derivable from this common

* Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium.—*Cic. Tusc.* 1.

† Neque enim assentior iis, qui hæc nuper disserere cœperunt cum corporibus simul animas interire, atque omnia morte deleri; plus apud me antiquitas valet, &c.—*Cic. Læl.*

‡ Cum de animarum æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. *Sen. Ep.* 117.

§ Ἱστόρηται θεῖοις ἀνδράσι εὐδαίμων βίος ψυχαῖς εὐδαίμοσι.—Celsus apud Orig. page 350.

‖ Παλαιός τις λόγος.—Phæd.

¶ Ex quibus humanæ vitæ erroribus atque ærumnis fit, ut interdum veteres illi vates, sive in sacris initiisque tradendis divinæ mentis interpretes, qui nos ob scelera suscepta in vita superiore pœnarum luendarum causa natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur, &c.—*Cic. Fragm.* page 79.

* Primi mortalium, quique ex his geniti naturam incorrupti sequebantur, &c.—*Sen Ep.* 90.

——χείρεσσι πίθον μέγα πῶμ' ἀφελοῦσα
Ἐσκέδασ', ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἐμήσατο κήδεα λυγρά.
Hes. Ἔργ.

[f] In Phædr.

fountain: such as that concerning the sons of God, and heroes dwelling on the earth; concerning men of old time exceeding those of following times in length of life, in stature, in strength of body, whereof in ancient poets there is so much mention; concerning men's conspiring in rebellion against God, affecting and attempting to climb heaven; concerning mankind being overwhelmed and destroyed by an universal deluge, and that by Divine justice, because of cruelty and oppression (with other enormous vices) generally reigning:

> — Qua terra patet, fera regnat Erinnys,
> In facinus jurasse putes: dent ocyus omnes
> Quas meruere pati (sic stat sententia) pœnas.

All over the earth, fierce rage doth reign; you would take them to have sworn to do mischief; let them all immediately undergo the pains which they have deserved; this is my resolution: so God, in Ovid's style, declared the reason why he decreed to bring that sore calamity upon mankind: I might add that prophecy, commonly known, that this world shall finally perish by a general conflagration.[g]

These opinions and stories, chiefly concern man; there were divers others concerning God and religion, sprouting probably from the same root. That Divine goodness was the pure motive of God's making the world, seems to have been a tradition; implied by their saying that *Love was the first, and the chief of the Gods:*[h] πρώτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μηθίσατο πάντων, said Parmenides; and, Ἠδ' Ἔρος, ὃς πάντεσσι μεταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισι, said Hesiod. That God made the world out of a chaos, or confused heap of matter; which is so plainly expressed in Hesiod, in Ovid, and in other ancient writers. That God did make or beget inferior insensible powers (of great understanding and ability; whom they called gods, and the children of the sovereign God;[i]) whom God immediately did converse with, and in royal manner did govern; whom he did employ as spies and agents in providential administrations of human affairs; who did frequently appear unto, and familiarly converse with men; who do walk up and down the earth, observing men's actions; secretly assisting and comforting good men, restraining and crossing and punishing the bad; whereof we have so many instances in Homer, in Hesiod, and in other ancient writers; showing as to those matters the general conceits of the old world. That God's especial presence and residence was above, in heaven, Aristotle expressly tell us was the belief of all men; *All men* (saith he) *have an opinion concerning Gods, and all men assign the highest place to the Gods, both Greeks and Barbarians.**

That God's providence did extend itself to all particularities of affairs;† and that all things were ordered by him; he constantly exercising both benignity and justice suitably to the deserts and needs of men; encouraging and assisting; blessing and rewarding virtuous and pious men; relieving the distressed and helpless; controlling and chastising such as were outrageously unjust or impious. That God at seasons used to declare his mind to men (his approbation or displeasure in regard to their doings) by accidents preternatural or prodigious; did presignify future events; did impart foreknowledge of them in several ways; by dreams, by visions, by inspirations, &c. To these opinions were answerable divers common practices; invocating divine help in need; consulting God by oracle in case of ignorance or doubt; deprecating Divine vengeance; making acknowledgments to God in hymns and praises; returning oblations for benefits received, both common and special; expiating guilt, and appeasing God's wrath by purgations and by sacrifices (a practice peculiarly unlikely to proceed from any other reason than institution;) fortifying testimonies and promises by oath, or appeal to Divine knowledge and justice; invoking (upon condition) God's judgments upon themselves or others, what is called cursing;‡ appointing priests for God's service, and yielding

[g] Clem. Str. v. p. 442.
[h] Arist. Metaph. i. 4.
[i] Arist. Pol. i. 1.

* Πάντες γὰρ ἄνθρωποι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν, καὶ πάντες τὸν ἀνωτάτω τῷ θείῳ τόπον ἀποδιδόασι καὶ Βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες.—De Cœlo, i. 3.

† That God doth know all the actions, words, and inward thoughts of men.—*Vide Cl. Str.* 5.

‡ That there will be a future judgment, and rewards suited to the practices of men in this life.—*Vide Cl. Strom.* v. p. 442.

them extraordinary respect; consecrating temples and altars; making vows, and dedicating gifts; celebrating festivals; paying tithes (that very determinate part) of the fruits of the earth, of the spoils in war, of the gains in trade, by way of acknowledgment and thankfulness to the Donor and Disposer of all things: in which, and the like opinions and performances (which it would be a long business particularly to insist on), men's general concurrence doth fairly argue, that their religion did peculiarly result from one simple institution common to mankind.

To these we might adjoin divers civil customs, wherein most nations did, from this cause probably, conspire: for instance, their counting by decades, or stoping at ten in their numerical computations; which Aristotle says, all men, both Barbarians and Greeks, did use, noting, that so common an agreement could not arise from chance, but from nature;* but it is much more plausible to assign its rise to tradition. Their having every where anciently the same number of letters, and the same names (or little varied) of them. Their dividing time into weeks (or systems of seven days;) of which practice to have been general there be many plain testimonies. Their beginning the *νυχθήμερον* (or account of the daily revolution of the heavens) from the night, grounded probably upon the report that night did precede day; as Hesiod phraseth it, that *night did beget day.*† Their general abhorrence of incestuous copulations; of which there is indeed some ground in nature, but none, I suppose, so very clear or discernible as might serve alone to produce such a consent; yea, perhaps, if one consider it, the whole business concerning matrimony will seem drawn from the head we discourse of. Their great care of funerals, and decently interring the dead; which Cicero[1] indeed deduces as a consequence upon their belief of the soul's immortality. In fine, the consent of the old world in all moral notions of moment doth (to my sense) much imply the same thing; which notions, although natural reason well used might suggest to all men, yet men, it seems, were never so generally disposed to reason well, as thereby alone to discern and approve unanimously the same truths; especially truths of this nature; which many men are apt to dislike (as repugnant to their desires), and consequently not ready to believe; which yet might easily by education be infused into their minds, and, by virtue of the prejudice thereby begot (assisted by plausible reason and popular consent), be preserved and rooted in them.

Now these (with divers more, perhaps, which they who are curiously inquisitive might observe) common persuasions (whether concerning matters of universal truth, or of particular facts) and those common usages having little or nothing of foundation apparent in man's nature, or in the clear reason of the thing, no prevailing appetite or inclination of man's soul prompting to them, no occasion commonly incident to human affairs being apt to suggest them, (at least divers of them; there being indeed rather an aptitude in men to disapprove and resist them, as cross to their dispositions), we cannot reasonably deduce them from any other cause than such as we have assigned, men's being, as St. Paul speaks, *made of one blood*, and receiving, as their nature, so their principles of opinion and practice, from the same common parents.

To confirm which discourse, and to prevent further objections against it, we may consider, that however, perhaps, among some very barbarous nations, this principal tradition (together with others mentioned, attending thereon) may have been almost worn out by time and men's stupid negligence; that however, also, among some people affecting semblances of singular wisdom, as among the Greeks, the matter thereof might fall under question, and some might doubt thereof, others contradict and deny it; yet most ancient histories (particularly that of Moses, far most ancient of all, and therefore, even secluding its special and more sacred authority, of all most credible) do

* Πάντες ἄνθρωποι καὶ Βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες εἰς τὰ δέκα καταριθμοῦσι—οὐ γὰρ δὲ ἀπὸ τύχης γε αὐτὸ ποιοῦντες φαίνονται, καὶ δεί· τὸ δὲ δεὶ καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων οὐκ ἀπὸ τύχης, ἀλλὰ φυσικόν.—Arist. Probl. xv. 3.

† Νυκτὸς δ' αὖτ' αἴθήρ τε καὶ ἡμέρη ἐξεγένοντο.—Hesiod. Theog.

—— dies natales, et mensium, et annorum initia sic observant, ut noctem dies subsequatur.—*Cæs. de Gal.* 1. 6.

[1] In Læl

attest them to have been, in substance, universally received, running with a strong and clear current among the eastern people (the Chaldeans, Phœnicians, and Egyptians;) who, that they were the most ancient inhabiters of the earth, from whom the rest of mankind was propagated, the antiquity of empires among them, the first use of letters, the rise of arts, the greater progress in all kinds of civil culture (which things argue a longer continuance in one place and state), beside express records of story and visible monuments of things performed among them, do sufficiently declare; whose consent, therefore, doth in reason, so far as serves our purpose, involve the consent of all mankind; and doth confirm those notions to have flowed from the clear spring of our first parents their instruction.

It is also true, I must confess, that these original traditions (concerning the being and providence of God), as must necessarily happen, not only by the malice of evil spirits, but from man's natural infirmity and proneness to change, even to the worse (as also from men's aptness to mistake, from rude ignorance, from wantonness of fancy, from craftiness in promoting designs of ambition and covetousness, by introducing novelties, and from such like causes), did soon begin to be adulterated by many corrupt mixtures, did by degrees degenerate exceedingly into various shapes of superstition, falsehood, and futility. Yet even so was Judaism depraved by the Scribes; and Christianity itself hath been strangely debased by a long course of ignorant and bad times; yet who can doubt but both these were derived from one pure instruction; that of Moses, this of Christ our Lord? That it might so fare with the primitive traditions of religion, is evident; that it really did so, we have even the judgment and assertion of Aristotle himself, in those remarkable words of his to this purpose: *There were* (saith he) *things conveyed traditionally by the primitive and ancient men, and left in a fabulous dress to their posterity; that there are these Gods, and that Divinity maintains* (or encompasses) *all nature: but other things were to these fictitiously superinduced for persuasion of the vulgar sort, and for the use of laws and public commodity: hence they speak of the Gods, as having a human shape, or resembling other living creatures, and other things consequent upon, or agreeable to, these sayings; from which things if we separate that only which was first delivered, that they deemed the Gods the first being, we may suppose what they said divinely spoken. And it is according to probability, all art and philosophy being, as might possibly, often invented and lost again, that even these opinions of them have as relics been preserved until now: the opinion, then, of our fathers, and that which came from the first men, is only thus far manifest to us.**

Thus did the philosopher, with a sagacity worthy so great a man, discern, that through that coarser ore, consisting in great part of dross, and feculency (taken from the fondness or fraud of human invention, or from diabolical suggestion), a pure vein of truth did run, drawn from the source of primitive tradition; from which being supposed, we do infer, what he acknowledges divinely said, that there doth exist one first being or substance, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfection. The like observations and judgments might be produced out of divers other wise men (Plato, Cicero, and the like), who acknowledge and urge this common tradition as a good argument of the truths we maintain, as to the substance of them; yet scruple not to dissent from and to reprehend the vulgar errors and bad customs which had crept in and became annexed to them. But let thus much suffice for this whole argument; being the last of those I intend to use for the proof of that fundamental point, which is the root of all religion and piety.

I have produced several arguments to

* Παραδέδοται δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ παλαιῶν, ἐν μύθου σχήματι καταλελειμμένα τοῖς ὕστερον, ὅτι θεοί τέ εἰσιν οὗτοι, καὶ περιέχει τὸ θεῖον τὴν ὅλην φυσιν. τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ μυθικῶς ἤδη προσῆχθαι πρὸς τὴν πειθὼ τῶν πολλῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν εἰς τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὸ συμφέρον χρῆσιν. ἀνθρωποειδεῖς τε γὰρ τούτους, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ὁμοίους τισὶ λέγουσι, καὶ τούτοις ἕτερα ἀκόλουθα, καὶ πυράπλήσια τοῖς εἰρημένοις· ὧν εἴ τις χωρίσας αὐτὸ λάβοι μόνον τὸ πρῶτον, ὅτι θεοὺς ᾤοντο τὰς πρώτας οὐσίας εἶναι, θείως ἂν εἰρῆσθαι νομίσειε. καὶ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς πολλάκις εὑρημένης εἰς τὸ δυνατὸν ἑκάστης καὶ τέχνης, καὶ φιλοσοφίας, καὶ πάλιν φθειρομένον· καὶ ταύτας τὰς δόξας ἐκείνων, οἷον λείψανα περισεσῶσθαι μέχρι τοῦ νῦν· ἡ μὲν οὖν πάτριος δόξα, καὶ ἡ παρὰ τῶν πρώτων ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἡμῖν φανερὰ μόνον.—Arist. Metaphys. xii. 8.

that purpose (or rather several kinds of argument, each containing many subordinate ones), most proper, I conceive, and apt to have a general efficacy upon men's mind's, in begetting and confirming a belief thereof. Each of them have indeed, to my seeming, even singly taken, a force irresistible; and the greatest in its kind, that any such conclusion, not immediately apparent to sense, is capable of. The existence of any one cause in natural philosophy, is not there demonstrable by effects in any proportion so many or various, so conspicuous or certain. No question can be determined by an authority so ample and comprehensive, so express and peremptory. No doctrine can to its confirmation allege so general, so constant, so uniform a tradition. No matter of fact can be assured by testimonies so many in number, so various in kind, so weighty in quality, as those upon which this conclusion doth stand. And if we join together all these, in themselves so considerable and powerful forces, how can we be able to resist them? how can we dare to doubt of that, which they conspire to infer? When, I say, to the universal harmony of nature the common voice of nations doth yield its consent; when with the ordinary course of things, so many extraordinary accidents do concur in vote; when that which so many reasons prove, continual tradition also teaches; what can the result be, but firm persuasion in every wise and honest heart of the proposition so confirmed? except we can suppose, that by a fatal conspiracy all the appearances in nature, and all the generations of men, the highest reason, and the greatest authority imaginable, have combined to deceive us.

In the precedent Discourses I have endeavoured to prove the existence of God, by arguments, which do indeed more immediately evince those three principal attributes, wisdom, power, and goodness incomprehensible, but which also consequentially declare all other the attributes commonly esteemed ingredients of that notion, which answers to the name of God (absolutely put, and without any adjunct limiting and diminishing it;) all those attributes, which Aristotle's definition, *The eternal most excellent living thing*,* or that of Tertullian, *The supreme great thing*,† do include or imply; namely, his *unity* first: then his *eternity* and indefectibility; his immense *omnipresence*, his *spirituality*; his *justice* and *veracity*; his *Sovereign Majesty* and authority; with the like connected to those (for I cannot prosecute all the Divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of distinction which our manner of conceit and expression is wont to assign.)

The uniformity, concord, and perfect harmony which appear in the constitution and conservation of things; their conspiring to one end, their continuing in the same order and course, do plainly declare the unity of God; even as the lasting peace of a commonwealth (composed of persons different in affections and humour) argues one law, that regulates and contains them; as the orderly march of an army shows it managed by one conduct; as the uniformity of a house, or of a town, declares it contrived by one architect.

And hereto also the common suffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for, however that they worshipped a multitude of inferior deities, yet that there was one Supreme God, Author and Governor of the rest, and of all things beside, transcending in power and wisdom, and all kind of perfection, was evidently the common opinion; whom therefore we see the poets (the best interpreters of the popular opinions) do style the *Father of gods and men; The King of the gods; the most high, most great, most excellent, &c.*‡ *The greater popularity* (as Tertullian speaks) *of mankind, even when idolatry obscured the sense of Divine providence, did however appropriate the name of God especially to one, in their usual expressions; being wont to say, If God grant;* and, *What pleases God;* and, *I commend it to God.*‖ And if the

* Φαμὲν δὲ τὸν Θεὸν εἶναι ζῶον ἀΐδιον ἄριστον.—Arist. Metaph. xii. 7.

† Summum magnum, et forma, et ratione, et vi, et potestate.—*Tert. adv. Marc* i. 3.

Ἡ μακαρία φύσις· ἡ ἄφθονος ἀγαθότης· τὸ ἀγαπητὸν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγου μετειληφόσι τὸ πολυπόθητον κάλλος· ἡ ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων· ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ζωῆς· τὸ νοερὸν φῶς· ἡ ἀπρόσιτος σοφία.—Bas Hexaem. λογ. α'.

‡ Ὕψιστος, μέγιστος, κράτιστος.

‖ Major popularitas generis humani—etiam

vulgar had in some measure this conceit, the wiser sort appear to have had more clear and full apprehensions and persuasions concerning it: Plato refers the making of the world to one whom he calls *Πατέρα καὶ Ποιητὴν* (*The Father and Maker of the universe.*) Aristotle, when he hath occasion to speak of God, doth usually speak in the singular; so do other philosophers, as the Stoics, in their famous precept *Deum sequi* (to *follow God*, that is, to acquiesce in, or submit to, Divine providence.) Sometime they do expressly signify this to be their opinion: *There are many popular gods* (said Antisthenes), *but one natural one:*[k] *εἷς δὲ ὢν πολυωνυμός ἐστι· Being really one* (saith the author *de Mundo*) *he hath many names; according to the several affections he discovers, and the operations he exerts:*[l] with whom Seneca thus agrees: *So often as you please, you may diversely name the Author of things: there may be so many appellations of him, as there be gifts or offices and operations: him our people fancy to be father Bacchus, and Hercules, and Mercury; call him also Nature, Fate, Fortune: all these are but names of the same God, variously using his power.** If they ever speak of Gods plurally, they are to be understood to speak with the like opinion of them, as we of angels, that is, of invisible, intelligent powers, created by the supreme God, dependent of him, subject to him;† Mars. Ficinus's caution concerning Plato being applicable to the rest:—*sed ne turbet quæso Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot possunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.* So much for God's *unity.*

As to his *eternity:* if God made all things, he could not receive being from another; and he who made this world, what reason can there be to suppose him to be from another? Nor can any thing receive a being from itself, or from mere nothing spring up into being; therefore the Maker of the world must be eternal. Something, of necessity, must be eternal, otherwise nothing could have been at all; other things show themselves to have proceeded from the wisdom, power, and goodness of One; whence that One is eternal; and so all nations have consented that God is.

That he is immortal and immutable, doth also follow plainly: for he not depending for his being, or any thing thereto belonging, upon any other thing, neither can he depend for his continuance or conservation; having power superior to all things, as having conferred on them whatever of power they have, nothing can oppose him, or make any prevalent impression upon him, so as to destroy or alter any thing in him.

Also, from his making, his upholding, his governing all things, is consequent, that he was ever, and is every where: where his power is, there his hand is; for every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient; nothing can act upon what is distant. That with his presence and power he doth penetrate all things, operating insensibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the spirituality of his being; and that he doth not consist of such matter (so extended, so divisible) as those things do, which we by sense perceive.

His overreaching wisdom implies him uncapable of being deceived; and his overbearing power signifies that he doth not need to deceive; and his transcendent goodness proves him unwilling to deceive: the like we may say of doing wrong; whence are consequent his perfect veracity and justice.

Lastly, the excellency of his nature, the eminency of his wisdom and power, the abundance of his goodness; as also, his having given being, then preserving it to all things, do infer his rightful title to supreme dominion; and accordingly, that all love, all obedience, all praise and

tanta idololatria dominationem obumbrante, seorsum tamen illum, quasi proprio nomine Deum perhibent; et Deum Deorum; et si Deus dederit; et quod Deo placet; et Deo commendo.—*Tertull. adv. Marc.* i. 10.

* Quoties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare: tot appellationes ejus esse possunt, quot munera; hunc et Liberum patrem, et Herculem, ac Mercurium nostri putant; sic hunc Naturam voca, Fatum, Fortunam; omnia ejusdem Dei nomina sunt varie utentis sua potestate.—*Sen. de Benef.* iv. 7.

† See that most remarkable saying of Sophocles, (*apud Grot. in Excerpt.* page 149,) *εἷς ταῖς ἀληθείαισιν, εἷς ἐστιν θεὸς*, &c.—Mars. Fic. in Arg. lib. x. de Leg.

[k] Cic. 1, de N. D.

[l] Arist. de Mund. cap. 7.

veneration, are due to him; according to the devout acknowledgment of those blessed elders: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and honour and power* (or authority), *because thou hast made all things; and for thy will they are and were created.*[m]

I Believe in God.

SERMON IX.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM SUPERNATURAL EFFECTS.

JOHN v. 17.—*But Jesus answered them, My Father hitherto worketh, and I work.*

WHEN at first by the Divine power this visible system of things was consummated and settled in that course wherein it now stands, it is said that *God rested from all his work which he had made:*[a] the plain meaning of which saying is, that God had so framed all the parts of nature, and several kinds of things, and disposed them into such an order, and inserted into them such principles of action, that thereafter (without more than ordinary conservation or concourse from him) things generally should continue in their being, station, and course, without any great change, for ever; that is, for so long as God had determined, or till their due period was run through:* (*He established them*, as the Psalmist speaks, *for ever and ever; he made a decree, that shall not pass: His word was settled in the heavens, and his faithfulness unto all generations: they continue this day according to his ordinances: He made a covenant with day and night, and appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth:*[b]) thus God rested and ceased from his work of creation. But it is not said, nor intended, that God did absolutely give over or forbear working; that he withdrew his care, and tied up, as it were, his own hands by a resolution not to intermeddle more with any thing, but to enjoy a kind of Epicurean ease and ἀπραξία. No: his wisdom hath so ordered things, that there should be need and reason of his acting continually; that there should be frequent occasion of variously displaying his glorious attributes; of exercising his power, of demonstrating his goodness.* Indeed, as to beings merely natural and unintelligent, there were no need of his doing more; for they are all thoroughly *his* obedient *servants*, and exactly fulfil his word; never straggling from the station in which he placed them; never transgressing the rule that he prescribed them: but he hath also made other beings, by nature uncapable of such uniformity and settlement; very free, and therefore very mutable; to the well governing of whom, therefore, a continual intention and activity is requisite. For the use and benefit of which beings, as a great part of nature was designed and made by God, so it was not unmeet, that for their sake he should sometime alter the course of nature, and cross or check the stream of things. The fuller and clearer illustration of his glory, the showing that all things do not pass on in a fatal tract;[c] the confirming that he made nature, because he can command and control it; the demonstration of his especial care over and love toward men, in suspending or thwarting his own established laws and decrees, as it were, for their sake; the exciting men the more to mind God, and impressing on them a respect toward him; the begetting faith in him, and hope in his providence, are fair accounts, for which God sometimes should perform (even in a manner notorious and remarkable to us) actions extraordinary. And that God doeth so, we learn in the words I read from the mouth of truth itself; whose affirmation (for persuading the incredulous) I intend to second with particular instances, attested to by reasona-

* Ἔστιν δ' οὖν καταπεπαυκέναι τὸ τὴν τάξιν τῶν γενομένων εἰς πάντα χρόνον ἀπαράλλατως φυλάσσεσθαι τετάχεται, καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς ἀταξίας ἕκαστον τῶν κτισμάτων καταπεπαυκέναι.—Clem. Alex. Strom. vi. (page 4923.)

[m] Rev. iv. 11. [a] Gen. ii. 2.

[b] Psal. cxlviii. 6; cxix. 89, &c.; Jer. v. 22; xxxiii. 25; xxxi. 36.

* Ἀγαθὸς γὰρ ὢν εἰ παύσεται πότε ἀγαθοεργῶν, καὶ τοῦ Θεὸς εἶναι παύσεται.—Clem. Alex. ibid. Psal. cxix. 91; cxlviii. 8; Isa. xl. 26; Psal. civ. 9, 19.

[c] John ix. 3; Exod. vii. 5; Deut. iv. 35; Dan. iv. 25.

ble proof, suitable to the nature of the matter; and this with design to infer from such operations (as effects assignable to no other cause) the existence of God; having endeavoured formerly to deduce the same from the common ordinary works, appearing in both worlds, natural and human. And as we before distinguished the ordinary works or actions, so here we shall distinguish the extraordinary ones, into two sorts; into those which are above or against the course (or power) of nature; and those which surmount or cross the stream of human affairs; such as being evidenced and granted to have been readily performed, either all men will believe, or the wisest men will readily confess the being of such a cause as we assert.

1. Let us first consider the first kind: and of these we may generally affirm, that no man can deny many such to have been performed, without giving the lie to the most authentic records of history that are or have been extant; without extremely disparaging the credit of mankind; without impeaching all nations and all ages not only of extreme weakness (in credulous assent unto, regarding and relying upon, such appearances; which not only the vulgar sort, but even princes and statesmen, learned men and philosophers, every where have done), but of notorious baseness and dishonesty, in devising and reporting them;* without indeed derogating utterly from all testimony that can be rendered to any matter of fact, and rendering it wholly insignificant; for that if we may disbelieve these reports, there is no reason we should believe any thing that is told us.

To this kind we may refer the presignification and prediction of future events, especially those which are contingent, and depend upon man's free choice; to the doing of which nothing is more evident in itself, nor more acknowledged by all, than that a power or wisdom supernatural is required; concerning which we have the (not despicable) consent of all times, continued down from the remotest antiquity, that frequently they have been made: *There is* (saith Cicero) *an ancient opinion, drawn even from the heroical times* (that is, from the utmost bounds of time spoken of) *that there is among men a certain divination, which the Greeks call prophecy* (or inspiration), *that is, a presension, and knowledge of future things.** And of this kind even profane story doth afford many instances: there indeed having scarce happened any considerable revolution in state, or action in war, whereof we do not find mentioned in history some presignification or prediction;† whereof, though many were indeed dark and ambiguous, or captious and fallacious, yet some were very clear and express (according as God was in his wisdom pleased to use the ministry of those spirits, which immediately conveyed them, in directing men for their good, or misguiding them for their deserved punishment;) such as were, for instance, that concerning Cyrus's conquering the Lydians; that concerning the battle at Salamis; that concerning the battle of Leuctres;‡ and divers others which occur in stories composed by wise men of the wisest nations; even the life of one man (good Socrates), described by excellent persons his most intimate acquaintance (Zenophon and Plato), affords divers;[d] and Cicero acquaints us, that Chrysippus did collect (and it is great pity his collection hath perished) an innumerable store of them, all confirmed by good authority and testimony.|| I cannot stand to relate many of them particularly, or discuss the validity of relations concern-

* Nostrum quidem, inquit [Socrates], humanum est consilium, sed de rebus et obscuris et incertis ad Apollinem censeo referendum, ad quem etiam Athenienses publice de majoribus rebus semper retulerunt, &c.—*Cic. de Divin.* p. 206.

* Vetus opinio est jam usque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque et populi Romani, et omnium hominum firmata consensu, versari quandam inter homines divinationem; quam Græci μαντικὴν appellant, id est, præsensionem et scientiam rerum futurarum.—*De Div.*

† Gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem, tamque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, et a quibusdam intelligi, prædicique posse censeat.—*Idem.*

‡ Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡμίονας, &c.—Herod. 1.

ᵛ Ὦ θείη Σάλαμις, &c. Herod. 7.

Λεύκτρα δέ μοι σκιόεντα μέλει, &c.—Pausan. ix. p. 563.

|| Collegit innumerabilia oracula Chrysippus, nec ullum sine locuplete auctore, atque teste.—*De Div.* 172.

[d] *Vide* Cic. de Divin. p. 206; de Nat. Deor. ii. p. 54.

ing such instances: I shall only say, that discourse in Tully, concerning the oracle at Delphos, which may be extended to the rest of that sort, doth not seem contemptible: *I defend* (saith he) *this one thing; that never would that oracle have been so renowned, nor so stuffed with the gifts of all nations and kings, if every age had not experienced the truth of those oracles;** for it is hard that a mere imposture should, to the expense and damage of so many persons, so long continue in credit. I will adjoin but one observation to this purpose, that even among those pagans who regarded these things, it was known and acknowledged, that such portending, or predicting future things, although immediately conveyed by inferior powers, did originally proceed from the one Supreme God: so the wise poet implies, when he makes the prophetic Fury say, that she received her prediction from Apollo, and Apollo from the Almighty Father:

> Accipite ergo animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta,
> Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
> Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando:
> *Æneid.* 3.

where Servius notes, that even Apollo (he who among their deities was in chief esteem for rendering oracles) *is said to derive his knowledge from Jove*, or the Sovereign God.†

It seemed not amiss to touch those instances of this kind which profane story yields, but the holy scriptures afford most evident and eminent ones; some of them extant in books written and in use long before the events foretold: as that of Abraham's concerning his posterity sojourning and being afflicted in Egypt four hundred years;[e] of the prophet concerning Josiah (some hundred years before his birth), that such a prince should be, and what he should do;[f] of Isaiah concerning Cyrus *by name*, his conquests, his restoring the Jews from exile, his redifying Jerusalem; of Jeremiah concerning the captivity, and its duration for seventy years; of Daniel concerning the grand revolutions of empire in the world (wherein the achievements of Alexander and his successors are so plainly described, that Porphyrius could not but acknowledge the consonancy of them to the events;) of our Saviour concerning the siege and destruction of Jerusalem:[g] the truth of which reports, although we should allow those writings which contain them an authority no greater than human, there were no reason to question; since most of those writings were extant a good time before the events specified. Now if but one of these innumerable instances were true, if ever one event hath been presignified or predicted (and it were a hard case, that among so many not one should prove so), it sufficiently evinces what we intend.

But to our purpose especially do appertain the works usualy styled *miraculous*, which exceed or contravene the ordinary course or power of nature; which therefore all men will readily confess performably only by an agent in power or knowledge exceeding their comprehension (such as are, for example, the fire being withheld from burning, and the waters from flowing;[h] the sick (being without medicinal applications) cured of long chronical distempers; limbs being (in the like manner) restored to persons maimed, and senses to them who from their birth (or otherwise for a long time) had been deprived of their use; restoring the dead to life (a thing which Pliny mentions as impossible in his conceit to God himself,*) and the like:) of these, although all nations have had so many performed among them, as sufficed to breed every where a constant opinion that a divine power did frequently interpose, so as to control and overbear the force of nature (which opinion could not in likelihood so generally and constantly prevail without any ground at all;†) yet

* Defendo unum hoc, nunquam illud oraculum Delphis tam celebre, et tam clarum fuisset, neque tantis donis refertum omnium populorum atque regum, nisi omnis ætas oraculorum illorum veritatem esset experta, &c.—P. 172.

† Notandum Apollinem quæ dicit a Jove cognoscere.

[e] Gen. xv. 13.

[f] 1 Kings xiii. 2; Isa. xliv. & xlv.

* Ne Deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest consciscere mortem, nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos.—*Nat. Hist.* ii. 7.

† Φήμη δ' οὔτις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται, ἥντινα πολλοὶ λαοὶ φημίζουσι.

[g] Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10; Dan. ix. 2; *vide* Chrys. cont. Jud. 2, tom. vi. p. 328; Dan. viii. 21, &c.; Luke xix. 43; Matt. xxiv. 2.

[h] John iii. 2.

the holy scriptures do most fully and clearly testify concerning them to have been in great number performed (for the confirmation of that divine truth and will of God, which they declare him pleased to reveal; for guiding men into, or settling them in, right opinions or good practices; for disabusing and withdrawing them from ways of error and vice; for the encouragement and relief of good, or the restraint, discouragement, and chastisement of evil men; which in reason are the most proper causes, why by such a Being, as we suppose (so wise, so good), such works should be effected;) the testimonies concerning which there can be no good reason assigned of refusing, but very great to admit them, as we hope at another time satisfactorily to declare. Indeed God's patefaction of himself, his mind, his will (in many kinds and manners particularly to the Father of old, and afterward generally to all the world by his Son; on purpose sent from heaven to publish and accomplish his designs of mercy and favour to all mankind), accompanied with so many prodigious works of power, and so many glorious circumstances of providence conspicuous to all the world, and withal so accommodated as to beget first of all this assurance in us, that a Divine power doth exist and preside over all affairs both natural and human, is an argument which in all honest and well-disposed minds (not possessed with false prejudices, nor depraved by vicious inclinations) cannot but obtain effect; the fuller urging and confirming of which I shall refer to another season, when it will serve a more general purpose, even the confirming not only this part, but even the whole of our religion in gross: I shall only now briefly say concerning them, that considering the works themselves, they were in number so many and various; in kind so great and high; as to the manner of performance so naked and open (being done in the face, and exposed to the senses of all men;) that there could be no reason to suspect any juggling or human artifice used about them: considering the witnesses that asserted them, they were persons who by their writings, by their behaviour, by the effect of their endeavours, approved themselves very intelligent; in their intentions very honest and free from any sinister design, in their conversations very innocent and virtuous, in their attestation very consistent and constant; so that there could be desired no witnesses of any fact better qualified, or more credible then they: considering the design of those works, there could be none more noble and excellent, more worthy of God, more beneficial to man; it being chiefly the confirmation of a doctrine, incomparably the most reasonable and most useful that ever appeared among men; productive of the best fruits, apt (being entertained heartily) to make men highly good and truly happy; to promote the honour of God and the interests of goodness; to secure as much as can be, both the public and private welfare of mankind. Considering which things, we can have no good reason to distrust the performance of such works, by authentic records, by constant tradition attested to us.

I may adjoin to the former sorts of extraordinary actions, some other sorts, the consideration of which (although not so directly and immediately) may serve our main design; those (which the general opinion of mankind hath approved, and manifold testimony hath declared frequently to happen) which concern apparitions from another world, as it were, of beings unusual; concerning spirits haunting persons and places (these discerned by all senses, and by divers kinds of effects; of which the old world (the ancient poets and historians) did speak so much, and of which all ages have afforded several attestations very direct and plain, and having all advantages imaginable to beget credence; concerning visions made unto persons of especial eminency and influence (to priests and prophets;) concerning presignifications of future events by dreams; concerning the power of enchantments, implying the co-operation of invisible powers; concerning all sorts of intercourse and confederacy (formal or virtual) with bad spirits: all which things he that shall affirm to be mere fiction and delusion, must thereby with exceeding immodesty and rudeness charge the world with extreme both vanity and malignity; many, if not all, worthy historians, of much inconsiderateness or fraud; most lawgivers, of great silliness and rashness; most judicatories, of high

stupidity or cruelty; a vast number of witnesses, of the greatest malice or madness; all which have concurred to assert these matters of fact.

It is true, no question but there have been many vain pretences, many false reports, many unjust accusations, and some undue decisions, concerning these matters; that the vulgar sort is apt enough to be abused about them; that even intelligent and considerate men may at a distance in regard to some of them be imposed upon; but, as there would be no false gems obtruded, if there were no true ones found in nature; as no counterfeit coin would appear, were there no true one current; so neither can we well suppose that a confidence in some to feign, or a readiness in most to believe, stories of this kind, could arise, or should subsist, without some real ground, or without such things having in gross, somewhat of truth and reality. However, that the wiser and more refined sort of men, highest in parts and improvements both from study and experience (indeed the flower of every commonwealth; statesmen, lawgivers, judges, and priests), upon so many occasions of great importance, after most deliberate scanning such pretences and reports, should so often suffer themselves to be deluded, to the extreme injury of particular persons concerned, to the common abusing of mankind, to the hazard of their own reputation in point of wisdom and honesty, seems nowise reasonable to conceive. In likelihood rather the whole kind of all these things, were it altogether vain and groundless, would upon so frequent and so mature discussions have appeared to be so, and would consequently long since have been disowned, exploded, and thrust out of the world; for, as upon this occasion it is said in Tully, *Time wipeth out groundless conceits, but confirms that which is founded in nature, and real.**

Now if the truth and reality of these things (all or any of them), inferring the existence of powers invisible, at least inferior ones, though much superior to us in all sorts of ability, be admitted, it will at least (as removing the chief obstacles of incredulity) confer much to the belief of that supreme Divinity, which our Discourse strives to maintain.

I must acknowledge that both these arguments, drawn from testimonies concerning matters of fact (and indeed all other arguments), were invalid and insignificant, could any demonstration or any argument weighty enough to be brought to show the impossibility of such a thing to exist, as we infer to exist from them. But, as it is a very easy thing (so whoever is versed in speculation and reasoning about things, cannot but find) so many things possible to be, which do not actually exist; so it is hard to prove the impossibility of a thing's being; yea there is plainly no other mean of doing this, than in the manifesting an evident repugnance between being itself, and some property assigned to that thing; or between several properties attributed thereto; as if we should suppose a square circle, or a round square to exist. But in our case no man can show such a repugnance; between being and wisdom, power or goodness, there is no inconsistence surely; nor can any man evince one to be between being and co-existing with matter, or penetrating body; between being and insensibility; between being and any other property which we ascribe to God; nor is there any clashing between those properties themselves; it is therefore impossible to show that God cannot exist; and therefore it is unreasonable to disbelieve the testimonies (so many, so pregnant) that declare him to exist.*

Men indeed, who affix themselves to things which their sense offers, may be indisposed to abstract their minds from such things, may be unapt to frame conceptions about any other sort of things;† but to think there can be no other things than such as we see and feel, that nothing, endued with other properties than such as these objected to our sense have, can exist, implies a great dulness of ap-

* Opinionum commenta dies delet, naturæ judicia confirmat.—*De Nat. Deor.* ii. page 54.

* It is not enough to say peremptorily, it is nonsense; or that you cannot understand how it should be; such proceedings are intolerably both insolent and vain.

Ἀμύητοι γὰρ εἰσιν οἱ οὐδὲν ἄλλο οἰόμενοι εἶναι, ἢ οὗ ἂν δύνωνται ἁπτὸς ταῖν χεροῖν λαβέσθαι.—Plat. Theat.

† —— affigit humi divinæ particulam auræ.

prehension, a greater shortness of reason and judgment; it is much like the simplicity of a rustic, who, because he never was above three miles from home, cannot imagine the world to reach ten miles further; and will look upon all that is told him, concerning things more distant, to be false, and forged to abuse him. I add, that these men's incredulity is hence more inexcusable, because the possibility of such a being's existence, the compatibility and concurrence of such properties in one thing, is (as we otherwhere have largely showed) by a very plain instance declared, even by that being within every man, which in a degree partakes of all those properties.

I shall leave this head of discourse, with this one remark; that they are much mistaken, who place a kind of wisdom in being very incredulous, and unwilling to assent to any testimony, how full and clear soever: for this indeed is not wisdom, but the worst kind of folly. It is folly, because it causes ignorance and mistake, with all the consequents of these; and it is very bad, as being accompanied with disingenuity, obstinacy, rudeness, uncharitableness, and the like bad dispositions; from which credulity itself, the other extreme sort of folly, is exempt. Compare we, I say, these two sorts of fools; the credulous fool, who yields his assent hastily upon any slight ground; and the suspicious fool, who never will be stirred by any the strongest reason or clearest testimony; we shall find the latter in most respects the worst of the two; that his folly arises from worse causes, hath worse adjuncts, produceth worse effects. Credulity may spring from an airy complexion, or from a modest opinion of one's self; suspiciousness hath its birth from an earthy temper of body, or from self-conceit in the mind: that carries with it being civil and affable, and apt to correct an error; with this a man is intractable, unwilling to hear, stiff and incorrigible in his ignorance or mistake: that begets speed and alacrity in action; this renders a man heavy and dumpish, slow and tedious in his resolutions and in his proceedings: both include want of judgment; but this pretending to more thereof, becomes thereby more dangerous. Forward rashness, which is the same with that, may sometimes, like an acute disease, undo a man sooner; but stupid dotage, little differing from this, is (like a chronical distemper) commonly more mischievous, and always more hard to cure. In fine, were men in their other affairs, or in ordinary converse, so diffident to plain testimony, as some do seem to be in these matters concerning religion, they would soon feel great inconveniences to proceed thence; their business would stick, their conversation would be distasteful; they would be much more offensive, and no less ridiculous than the most credulous fool in the world. While men, therefore, so perversely distrustful, affect to seem wise, they affect really to be fools; and practise according to the worst sort of folly.

Thus have I, although very cursorily, considered the first kind of works extraordinary that appear in the world: I proceed briefly to touch the other sort, observable in the transaction of human affairs; for even in these there do happen things in a sort miraculous, or prodigious; according to reasonable estimation surpassing the common efficacy of human causes; by which God in a language more express, as it were, and in a louder tone, declares his presence and providence here; so that they must be very deaf and stupid, who do not from them learn lessons of piety and reverence toward God; who do not in them hear heaven thundering forth that proclamation to us all: *Discite justitiam moniti.* For instance,

1. We may observe, when any where things are come to such a pass, that iniquity and outrage do extremely prevail, so that the most of men's lives become intolerably grievous, that in such cases often the state of things, how seemingly stable and robust soever, in a manner sudden and strange, by means to appearance small and weak, to be overturned, and reduced to a more tolerable form; no strugglings of might, no fetches of policy, no circumspection or industry of man availing to uphold it, an invisible hand checking all such force, and crossing all such devices. *A stone cut out of the mountain without hands* (that is, a slender instrument coming forth out of some remote or secret place, without any considerable influence of human endeavour),

breaking in pieces the iron, and the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold;[h] there being raised up instantly a Moses, or a Maccabæus; an Ehud, or a Gideon; a Dion, or a Timoleon, by a single stroke, or a sudden impression, to deliver oppressed nations from slavery.

2. How many examples do experience and history afford us of justice and vengeance, in ways for their kind and for their circumstances very remarkable, executed in the face of the world upon persons (such as Corah and his fellows, Sennacherib, Herod, Brennus) notoriously wicked and mischievous, who have outbraved Heaven by their impiety, or horribly abused mankind by their injustice!

3. Yea, we may take notice, that even few of those men, whose actions have been illustrious for greatness void of goodness; who have climbed to height of power and state by the ruins and slaughters of mankind;[i] that, I say, few of such persons have departed off the stage in peace or honour. That Alexander was snapt in the flower of his age and glory; that Cæsar was no sooner arrived to the top of his fortune, than to the bottom of his life; neither having time allowed them to enjoy, scarce to taste, those fruits which they so eagerly sought and toiled for; both perhaps (one without any peradventure) being speeded away by violent and treacherous hands. Not to mention Pompey or Hannibal, or other such like men of exhorbitant ambition, whose fortunes were so strangely changed, and whose ends were so dismal.

4. We may however observe, that few great tyrants and oppressors, few persons insolently profane or sacrilegious, have escaped the visible stroke of Divine vengeance; a stroke inflicted in ways not only violent, but shameful; and that usually by means most unexpected, by the hands of their own guards, their own servants, their own favourites, the very instruments of their mischief, and these stirred up by slight causes, by some little disgrace or disgust received by them from their master.* What a long black legend of Caligulas, Neroes, Domitians, Commoduses, Heliogabaluses, Maximinuses,* may any man's observation even out of profane histories easily compose, of whom the Divine justice in such ways hath rid the world?[j]

5. I might also mention the judgments of God upon persons and families raised to wealth and splendour of estate by oppression, fraud, sacrilege, rapine, or such bad means; whose estates without any visible ordinary means do moulder and decay; a secret moth devouring them; a thing which falls under common observation.

6. The same providence hath more clearly discovered itself in the strange detections of murders, and other enormous mischiefs committed in darkness, and revealed by a light unaccountably darted from Heaven. Of which kind not only books, but common experience, doth furnish with stories and instances very remarkable both for number and weight.

7. The like strange discoveries of plots, contrived secretly against the public peace, and against the lives of princes, frequently offer themselves in story, and the like experience suggests concerning private men; *a bird of the air carrying the voice*[k] of the wicked traitor to the ears of him who is designed against; *the stones of the wall crying out*[l] treason and murder. Yea, generally, according to the Psalmist's observation, when men have *encouraged themselves in an evil matter, and have communed about laying snares privily—saying, who shall see them? God doth shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly they are wounded.*[m] So that all men have reason, as he adds they will do, *to fear, and to declare the work of God*, if they *wisely consider his doing:* and himself had reason to pronounce in another place, *The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.*[n]

8. I might adjoin the remarkable providences which also occur concerning the recompenses and encouragements of virtue;† in the protecting good men from

* Alexand. Pheræus, ab uxore occisus.—*Vide Plut. in Pelopida, ad fin.*

[h] Dan. ii. 45. [i] Dan. iv. 17.

* Of such as Sejanus, Rufinus, Eutropius, &c. Stilico, &c.

† Psal. xxxvii. 25,—I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken.

[j] Psal. lxxxiii. 17, 18.

[k] Eccl. x. 20. [l] Hab. ii. 11.

[m] Psal. lxiv. 5, 7. [n] Psal. ix. 16.

imminent dangers, delivering them from grievous straits, supplying them in extreme needs, prospering them in their undertakings, raising them (as Joseph, David, Daniel, &c.) by wonderful means to wealth and dignity, for their own encouragement, or for bublic benefit; concerning which occurrences the Psalmist had reason to say, *Whoso is wise will observe these things, and they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.*[o]

These considerations, with divers others of the same kind, grounded on Providence, I must confess have not, singly taken, the greatest force and evidence to infer our purpose, nor can they with the same assurance and peremptoriness be urged to every adversary or disbeliever, as some other arguments may; those, which we have formerly insisted on, drawn from nature. For in nature, all causes there being themselves destitute of immediate reason or choice, and subject to no chance or contingency (properly so called), we may indeed confidently ascribe all effects, in which any reason or counsel doth appear, whether ordinary or extraordinary, to Divine efficacy;* there being no other cause to which we can reasonably impute them:[p] but in human affairs, seeing man is an understanding and free agent, and few effects happen without some act of his intervening, there can hardly occur any passage, how rare and strange soever, which our incredulous adversaries, with some kind of colour or plausible shift, will not be ready to attribute unto some reach of man's wit, or to some *capricio* of his humour, or to some unaccountable casualty, incident to matters of this kind; (as we see the Philistines were apt to impute the plague of emerods to chance; the Israelites did presently charge that terrible judgment on Corah and his complices upon Moses and Aaron.[q]) And commonly divine and human influences upon these effects (even as in nature the influences of Heaven and of inferior particular causes) are so complicated and interwoven together, that it is not so easy to distinguish the one from the other, either in whole or in part, to separate the bounds of providence ordinary and extraordinary, to discern what God performs by usual instruments, what by his immediate hand. As also the actions of the wisest men are often grounded upon reasons remote from, and impenetrable by, vulgar conceit; so are the reasons of God's proceedings with men various and often mysterious; above the reach of our capacity with distinction to apprehend them: as who, for instance, can oftentimes readily distinguish between God's merciful patience toward bad men, and his gracious recompensing the good; between God's just vengeance on the one sort, and his fatherly correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice, either, as particular circumstances require, by adverse or prosperous events, and his trying or exercising the other's virtue by the like proceedings? Who can distinguish between what is performed or permitted upon general or upon particular accounts; in respect to the public, or in regard to private men; in relation to present times, or to posterity; upon absolute and immediate accounts, or in order to some further, more remote designs? Who, I say, can pretend skill enough to define what or how much is best to be done in these cases; when it is fit to allow men to proceed in the use of their freedom, when to interrupt them? Who, but he that exactly knows the limits of just and fit, the qualities and tempers of men, the state and circumstances of every thing?

I add, that God's governance of things hath no complete issue here; that this is not the only nor the chief place of dispensing rewards and punishments; that things are but doing here; and not done; in a progress and tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a state of final resolution or perfection: wherefore as we cannot fully judge of an artificial work by its first draughts, nor of a poem by some scenes, but must stay till all is finished and acted through; so we cannot so clearly discern the entire wisdom and justice of Divine dispensations here; not till that day, when, as St. Paul tells us, God's δικαιοκρισία, *his righteous judgment, shall be made apparent.*[r] Whence discourse grounded upon present events may not prove so convincing or satisfactory, except unto the children of wis-

* *Vide* Claud. in Ruffin. lib. 1, init. eleganter hac de re disserentem.

[o] Psal. cvii. 43. [p] Sen. de Pro. *vid.* init.

[q] 1 Sam. vi. 9; Numb. xvi. 41.

[r] Rom. ii. 5; Psal. x. 5.

dom, who by a sharper sense can discover even the smaller lines and more occult tracts of God's hand; who with an especial attention and sagacity do, as the prophet expresseth it, *regard the works of the Lord, and consider the operations of his hands.*[s] However, the frequent occurrences in human affairs of passages, such as we mentioned, so rare and remarkable, if they do not, singly and solitarily taken, thoroughly serve to demonstrate the hypothesis of Divine providence, yet at least they do much favour and strengthen it, being very congruous thereto. Supposing such a Providence, it is most probable (I may say necessary) that such events would happen; whence there can be no absurdity in ascribing them thereto, but much of reason in doing it. They are *digni vindice nodi*, difficulties not otherwise easily resolved, and therefore God may be most fitly introduced as the most probable cause of them; if strict discourse cannot compel us, yet ingenuity will incline us, and wisdom will oblige us to do so. *They that are wise will consider these things, and they shall understand the lovingkindness* (I add, and also both the wisdom and power) *of the Lord.*[t] *A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this,*[u] saith the Psalmist concerning the proceedings of Providence.

But however general providence doth work in convincing some, particular providence will at least produce that effect in many: for I dare appeal to most men (to those especially who have ever had any fear of God, or sense of goodness in them), if, sometime or other, in their lives, they have not in their pressing needs and straits (especially upon their addresses to God for help) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an insensible hand; if they have not sometimes in a manner unaccountable escaped imminent dangers; if they have not in the performance of their duty and devotion toward God experienced a comfort more than ordinary; if they cannot to some events of their life aptly apply those observations of the Psalmist: *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good.*[v] *O taste and see:* he appeals to experience; he supposes the Divine goodness may be seen and felt; that surely will be a most efficacious argument of God's existence and providence.[w] And so it is indeed to all good men, for whose comfort and confirmation it is chiefly mentioned, though it is not likely to have much influence upon them who have alienated themselves from God, and driven him *out of their thoughts;*[x] except they should (beyond what can be expected from them) be so civil and candid as to believe the testimony of others, who assert this great truth unto them from their own inward conscience and experience.

But let thus much serve, at present, for the showing that *God doth* (as our Lord tells us) *hitherto work;* and consequently that, as we thence meant to infer, God doth exist.

The Father.

SERMON X.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER.

EPH. iv. 6.—*One God and Father of all.*

I HAVE formerly discoursed concerning the nature of that belief which we here profess: I did also endeavour by several arguments to evince the truth and credibility of the first article of our Creed, which is indeed the foundation of all the rest, and of all religion, *that there is one God.* I proceed to the following parts.

The Father. The appellation of God, not improperly taken (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office which they bear to the supreme God), but relating to him who only, truly, and properly, is styled God, is sometimes but absolutely, sometime hath a relative apposition going along with it. Being ab-

[s] Psal. xxviii. 5; Isa. v. 12.
[t] Psal. cvii. 43; lxiv. 5, 7.
[u] Psal. xcii. 6.

[v] Psal. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8; cxlv. 18, 19.
[w] (1 John v. 10.)
[x] Psal. x. 4.

solutely or singly put, it sometimes refers, by way of eminency, particularly to the first Person in the blessed and glorious Trinity; as when Christ is called the *Son of God;* when God is put in distinction from the other Persons (when, for instance, it is said, *That they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Word was with God. To serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven.* And in that form of blessing, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all;*) but commonly it is to be understood for God essentially considered (according to the Divine essence common to all three Persons), to whom in that respect all the Divine attributes agree, and from whom all Divine operations (*absolute et ad extra*) do jointly proceed. And to this sense or notion we have hitherto supposed that the name of God might be here applied. For, that there is one God, having such essential attributes, is the first principle and foundation of all religion, which we must therefore suppose, if not directly expressed, yet at least sufficiently implied in the Creed.

And supposing the word in part doth imply this sense, the attribute or title of Father doth upon many accounts truly and properly belong to God (God absolute and essential), in relation to all things generally, and to some things particularly; especially, which is the most fruitful consideration, in respect to ourselves.

Let us first consider the accounts upon which, then the terms (or objects) in relation to which, God is so called; then let us apply the consideration to practice.

One God and Father of all.

Every attribute, every title, every relation of God, doth ground an obligation, doth afford an inducement, to good practice; but none other doth ground higher obligation, or yieldeth stronger inducement to all kinds of obedience, than doth this of *Father*, which here, and frequently otherwhere in holy scripture, is ascribed to God: unto which purpose, of exciting us to good practice (to all good practice generally, and particularly to some kinds thereof), I do now intend to apply the consideration thereof: but first let us consider in what respects, or upon what grounds, this title is attributed to God; then let us reflect somewhat upon the term, in respect to which God is styled *Father of all*, that is, in a larger sense of all things, in a stricter sense of all persons, in the most restrained sense of all us Christians.

The title of *father* is upon several accounts commonly given to things; one is causalty; for the efficient cause, or author of any thing, is called its father; any work is said to be the child, or offspring, of him that maketh or inventeth it: *Hath the rain a father*, (or, *Who is father of the rain?* as the LXX. render it), *or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?*[a] saith God in Job: another ground thereof is sustenance, or preservation; so Job saith of himself, that *he was a father to the poor and fatherless*, because he yielded them protection and relief;[b] so, *Roma patrem patræ Ciceronem libera dixit*, Rome called Cicero father, because he preserved it from the attempts of wicked conspirators against its liberty and safety: education also and instruction entitle to this name; whence St. Paul calleth Timothy and Philemon, the Corinthians and Galatians, whom he had instructed in the Christian faith, his *children*:[c] lastly, governance, attended with beneficent affection and care doth found this appellation; whence princes are usually styled the *fathers of their country*, being supposed to desire and to provide for the public good; so we have the *fathers of tribes*,[d] that is, the principal persons of them, who did preside over them: I do omit antiquity and age, for which we know that persons are vulgarly called fathers.

Upon all these accounts it is plain, that the title of Universal Father may truly be ascribed unto God; especially in respect to ourselves, who may be considered as equivalent to all other objects, as comprehending in us somewhat common to them all: God in some of those re-

[a] Job xxxviii. 28.
[b] Job xxix. 16; xxxi. 18.
[c] 1 Tim. i. 2; Philem. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 15; Gal. iv. 19.
[d] Josh. xix. 51; xxi. 1.

spects is the Father of all things, or of us as beings; God is more especially the Father of intelligent beings, and of us as such; God is the Father of all men, of all good men, and peculiarly of Christians; which respects all of them do or should concur in us. Let us survey those particulars somewhat distinctly, then apply them as obligations and inducements to good practice.

1. God is the Father of all things, or of us as creatures; as the efficient cause and creator of them all: *He made the world* (as St. Paul telleth the Athenians,) *and all things therein; He commanded* (saith the Psalmist) *and they were created; The world and the fulness thereof* (that is, all wherewith it is replenished, and which it contains), *he hath founded them:*[e] *All these things* (saith God in the Prophet) *hath mine hands made:* and *Ποιητὴν, καὶ Πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς, the Maker and Father of the universe,*[f] even Plato styleth God. God is also the Father of all things, because he preserveth and sustaineth them by his power; *He* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *beareth up all things by the word of his power;*[g] *He* (saith the Psalmist) *hath established them for ever and ever; he made a decree which shall not pass,*[h] by virtue of which they subsist: also because he by a continual care doth provide for them: *They all* (saith the Psalmist) *wait upon him that he may give them their meat in due season; what he giveth them, they gather; he openeth his hand, they are filled with good:*[i] he also governeth, and containeth them in good order; for, *his kingdom ruleth over all:* and *whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doeth he in heaven and earth:* all this he doeth with goodness and affection: for *his tender mercies are over all his works:*[j] whence even among pagans the word *Pater* absolutely put, did signify the *Supreme God*, they understanding thereby the Author, Preserver, and Governor of all things; and *Pater omnipotens* is the periphrasis, whereby the wisest poet doth usually express God.*

2. More especially God is the Father of intellectual beings; he is styled *the Father of spirits:* particularly the angels in way of excellency are called the sons of God:[k] *There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord:*[l] and, *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;*[m] in which place of Job the LXX. have *ἄγγελοί μου, my angels* (although perhaps there all God's creatures may be understood rejoicing and exulting, as it were, in their being, newly by the goodness of their Maker conferred on them:) again, *Who* (saith the Psalmist) *in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?*[n] The sons of the mighty: it is in the Hebrew, *the sons of God*, and so the LXX. render it; and what precedeth *who in heaven*, doth make it, as it seems, best interpretable of the angels. Of such beings God is more especially the Father, because he did produce them in a more excellent manner; for other things he made as it were by his hand, these he breathed out of his mouth; as it is said of Adam, when God infused his soul into his body, that *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;*[o] because they more nearly resemble God in their nature and properties (in spirituality, and independence upon matter; in life, and self-moving; in immortality, and perpetuity of being; in understanding and wisdom; in will and goodness; or in a capacity at least of such perfections;) because also he ruleth them in a nobler way; a way, not of blind and constrained obedience, but of wise and free choice, according to laws of justice, by obligations of ingenuity; because he

[e] Acts xvii. 24; xiv. 15; Psal. cxlv. 15; cxlvi. 6; lxxxix. 11; xxxiii. 6.

[f] Isa. lxvi. 2; xl. 26; Plat. in Tim. page 1047.

[g] Heb. i. 3. [h] Psal. cxlv. 15.

[i] Psal. civ. 27; cxlv. 15.

[j] Isa. xl. 26; Psal. cxv. 3; ciii. 19; cxxxv. 6; cxlvii. 15; cxlv. 9.

* —— O Pater, et Rex Jupiter——
Hor. Serm. ii. 1.

—— Pater ipse colendi
Haud facilem esse viam voluit—
Virg. G. i. 121.

Ζεῦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων.
Hom. Il. θ'. 31.

[k] Heb. xii. 9; Num. xvi 22.

[l] Job i. 6. [m] Job xxxviii. 7.

[n] Psal. lxxxix. 6; xxix. 1.

[o] Gen. ii. 7.

likewise beareth a more dear affection unto them, and a peculiar care over them: in respect to these beings indeed the relation of father is more proper, because they only can be sensible thereof, and capable to render the duties of piety, gratitude, and willing obedience suitable thereto:[p] *Rational beings* (saith an Ethnic philosopher), *are the sons of God, because they only are naturally fit to converse with God, being conjoined to him by participation of reason:** and thus indeed even the pagan theologers, commonly from primitive general tradition we may suppose, did conceive the Supreme God to be the Father of the gods (intending not such gods as were of man's devising, creatures deified by the flattery or fondness of the vulgar, but of higher rank, answering to our angels, whom they supposed as to approach in excellency of nature nearest to God, so to have derived their being from him, and to attend constantly upon him, partaking of his glory, and observing his pleasure;) whence *Divum pater, Father of the Gods*, is a common peraphrasis, or title of God among them; and particularly in the *Timæus* of Plato there is an oration which he representeth God making unto those creatures presently upon their creation, beginning thus: *O ye chief gods, of whom I am the Framer and Father;*† concerning which gods, that which he can say he pretendeth to deduce from ancient original tradition. But to come nearer to our more particular concernment.

3. God is the Father, in a more especial manner, of mankind: *Have we not* (saith the Prophet) *one Father? hath not one God created us?*[q] and Adam called *the son of God*, the genealogy of all men terminating in him; and, We are *all God's offspring*, saith St. Paul: we are so, for that *his hands made and fashioned our bodies*, and for that he *formed our spirits within us*, as the prophet speaketh. He made us *after his own image*, so as signally to represent and resemble himself, in properties of nature, and in eminence of condition;[r] in this great family of visible creatures he hath assigned unto us the principal station, so that other creatures there are but as servants waiting on us; we are as children, depending only on him; he hath showed an especial tenderness of affection and good-will toward us, in providing for us all manner of needful sustenance and comfortable accommodation; continually watching over us for our good, and *holding us up* (as the Psalmist speaketh) *from our mother's womb;*[s] bestowing on us good education (instructing us by the light of nature, or dictates of natural reason and conscience, by civil conversation, by the precepts of wise men, and examples of virtuous persons, by providential encouragements to good, and determents from evil; together with the secret whispers, advices, and motions of his grace;) bearing with excessive patience our infirmities, miscarriages, and offences; using seasonable and moderate chastisements to reclaim us from bad courses to those which our duty, and our advantage do require: in short, all God's dealings and demeanour toward mankind do argue in him a paternal regard thereto: whence even the blind heathens discerned and acknowledged this general relation of God to men; and *Gentis humanæ Pater, atque custos* (*O Father and keeper of mankind!*[t]) was an invocation suitable to their notion concerning him: from him they deduced our original; to him they ascribed the formation of our bodies, so full of wonderful artifice; from him they affirm our souls to be extracted; from his goodness and care they supposed all the conveniences of life which we enjoy to be derived; they conceived him to bear a kind affection unto man, and to have a constant care over him; as by many express testimonies might be showed, and from their practices evidently may be inferred.*

* Ὅτι κοινωνεῖν μόνον ταῦτα πέφυκε τῷ Θεῷ τῆς συναναστροφῆς κατὰ τὸν λόγον ἐπιπεπλεγμένα.—Arr. Ep. i. 9.

† Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς, πατήρ τε ——

[p] Psal. ciii. 20.

[q] Mal. ii. 10.

* Omnes si ad primam originem revocentur, a diis sunt.—*Sen. Ep.* 44.——A natura divina haustos animos, et delibutos habemus.—*Cic. de Div.* 1.

Charior est illis homo, quam sibi.

[r] Luke iii. 38; Acts xvii. 29; Job x. 8; Psal. cxxxix. 15, 16; Zech. xii. 1; Psal. xxxiii. 15; Gen. i. 27.

[s] Psal. lxxi. 6.

[t] Hor. Carm. i. 12; Epict. i. 3, 9.

4. Further, yet more especially God is the Father of all good men; such a relation being yet built upon higher grounds and respects; for as *good* they have another original from him;* virtue springeth in their hearts from a heavenly seed; that emendation and perfection of nature is produced by his grace enlightening and quickening them: they are images of him, resembling him in judgment and disposition of mind, in will and purpose, in action and behaviour; the which resemblances do argue them to be the sons of God, and indeed do constitute them such; for, *Love your enemies* (saith our Lord) *bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you—that you may be the sons of your Father in heaven;* and, *Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing thence; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the Most High.*[u] Imitation of God in goodness and beneficence doth, we see, found a filial relation unto God: to such, God answerably doth bear a paternal kindness and compassion; for, *Like as a father pitieth his children, so* (saith the Psalmist) *the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*[v] He in all respects dealeth with them as with his children; ὡς υἱοῖς προσφέρεται, as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh:[w] he teacheth and guideth them with wholesome advice upon all occasions; for, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose;* and, *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord:* he gently removeth and correcteth them; *Whom* (saith the Wise Man) *God loveth, he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth:*[x] he maintaineth them with all needful sustenance and accommodation without their care or trouble; for, *Take no care* (saith our Saviour), *saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?—for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things;*[y] he so knoweth and considereth it, as to provide, that *there shall not be*, as the Psalmist affirmeth, *any want unto them that fear him:*[z] he protecteth them from all danger, supporteth them in all distress, and rescueth them from all mischief; for, *His eyes are upon the righteous—to deliver his soul from death, and to keep him alive in famine; he keepeth all his bones, so that none of them is broken—though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand; many are his afflictions, but the Lord delivereth him out of all.*[a] Such paternal affections doth God bear, such paternal acts doth he exercise, toward good men; the which even pagan wise men did apprehend; of whom one thus expresseth himself: *God* (saith he) *hath a fatherly mind toward good men, and strongly loveth them—between them and God there is a friendship which virtue doth conciliate; a friendship, do I say? yea, a kindred and similitude; for that a good man is God's disciple and imitator, and his true offspring, whom that magnificent Father, no softly exacter of virtue, doth, after the manner of severe parents, educate hardly.**

5. We may further observe, that God in his proceedings with men, whereby he particularly designeth to contain them within bounds of duty, and thereby to lead them unto happiness, delighteth to represent himself under this obliging and endearing relation: thus he did in regard to his ancient people upon all occasions express himself: *Who are Israelites, whose is the adoption,*[b] saith St. Paul, reckoning this as the first of those privileges which appertain to the Jews: it was the commission to Moses, *Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn; and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me.*[c] Moses also, foreseeing how that people would misbehave themselves, doth thus in God's name expostulate with them: *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy Father that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? Of the Rock that begat thee thou*

* Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est.—*Sen. Epist.* 41; 1 Pet. i. 23.

[u] Matt. v. 44, 45; Luke vi. 35.

[v] Psal. ciii. 13. [w] Heb. xii. 7.

[x] Psal. xxv. 12; xxxvii. 23; Prov. iii. 12.

[y] Matt. vi. 31; vii. 11.

* Patrium habet Deus adversus bonos viros animum, et illos fortiter amat, &c.—*Sen. de Provid.* 1. 2.

[z] Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10; xxxvii. 11.

[a] Psal. xxxiii 18, 19; xxxiv. 20; xxxvii. 24; xxxiv. 19.

[b] Rom. ix. 4. [c] Exod. iv. 22.

art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.[d] David also thus addresseth himself to God in their behalf: *Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever; thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty:*[e] and, *Doubtless* (saith Isaiah) *thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting:*[f] and, *I am* (saith God in Jeremiah) *a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn; Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child? he is,* the LXX. render it in way of assertion, not of interrogation.

6. But in the Christian dispensation God more signally representeth himself in this quality and notion. God herein treateth us, not so much as our Lord and Master, with imperious rigour and awfulness, as our Father, with most gracious condescension, and allurements of kindness: *Our Lord* (the only Son of God in a sense infinitely most peculiar and high) *was not* (saith the apostle) *ashamed to call us brethren:*[h] *Go* (said our Lord, for instance of that gracious condescension) *to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father; both my God, and your God:*[i] and such are the advantages peculiar to Christians, grounding this relation toward them, that St. Paul, comparing our state in regard to God with that of the Jews, doth thus infer; *So that thou* (O Christian) *art not now a servant, but a son:*[j] so it is asserted, and accordingly (which is worth our while distinctly to observe) all the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf, are of such a nature, and are set out in such terms, as do ground and import this relation: for,

1. The reception of a believer into the participation of the privileges and advantages which Christianity tendereth, is termed *υἱοθεσία*, the making him a son; the adopting him into God's family, the conferring upon him the title and quality of God's child;[k] together with the internal disposition of mind, and the liberty of access and intercourse, which do suit that relation: *Whosoever* (saith St. John) *did receive him, to them he gave the power* (or privilege) *to become the sons of God, even to them who believed in his name:*[l] and, *Ye are all* (saith St. Paul) *the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus;*[m] that is, by sincerely embracing Christianity: And, *Behold* (saith St. John again) *what manner of love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God:* and, *Ye have not received the spirit of servitude unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father;*[n] that is, by which in our prayers with humble affection we freely, confidently, and readily, according to our Saviour's institution, do say, *Our Father.*

2. That renovation of our nature, and qualifying our minds, as the gospel prescribeth and requireth, is called regeneration, a new creation, a new birth, the begetting a new man within us: *If a man be not born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God;*[o] that is, he cannot be a good Christian: *Whoever is begot of God doth not sin;*[p] that is, good Christians do not live in a course of disobedience: *We are αὐτοῦ ποίημα, God's work,* or production, *being created in Christ Jesus to good works: Ye have been taught—to put on the new man, that is created according to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.*[q] In such terms is the effect of the Christian dispensation upon our hearts and lives described; and that with the greatest reason; for no act of God toward us can be more fatherly, than working in us by his grace the principles of Christian life, and the practices springing from it; nothing doth nearer advance us to a similitude with God, and a *participation of the Divine nature;*[r] nothing doth conciliate from God a more tender affection to us, or worketh in us a more dutiful affection

[d] Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.
[e] 1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11.
[f] Isa. lxiii. 16; xliv. 2, 24; xlvi 3.
[g] Jer. xxxi. 9, 20.
[h] Heb. ii. 11.
[i] John xx. 17.
[j] Gal. iv. 7.
[k] Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5; ii. 19; Rom. viii. 15.
[l] John i. 12.
[m] Gal. iii. 26.
[n] 1 John iii. 1; (Eph. iii. 15;) Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6.
[o] John iii. 3.
[p] 1 John iii. 9; Eph. ii. 10.
[q] Eph. iv. 21, 24; Col. iii. 10.
[r] 2 Pet. i. 4.

toward him, answerable to this relation, than doth a hearty compliance with the grace of the gospel.

3. The resurrection of good Christians after death to a better state of life, their entering into immortal bliss and glory, is worthily styled παλιγγενεσία, a being generated and born again; whereby they receive from God another more excellent life and state of being, more like and conformable to God: for, *We know* (saith St. John) *that if he shall appear* (or, that when he shall appear, as some copies read it), *we shall be like him;*[s] and, *As* (saith St. Paul) *we have borne the image of the earthly* (Adam), *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly:*[t] *We shall* (saith he) *be metamorphosed*, or transfigured, *into the same image:*[u] and, *They* (saith our Saviour) *which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead—are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection:*[v] that state of bliss is therefore styled a portion or inheritance, allotted to sons, and consequent upon such a relation: *If sons* (saith St. Paul) *then heirs; heirs of God, and coheirs with Christ, receiving the reward and promise of an eternal inheritance: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (saith St. Peter), *who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.*[w]

4. I might adjoin, that Christian men do become the sons of God by the intervention of our Saviour, assuming our nature, and conforming himself to the likeness of men; whereby he becomes *the first born of many brethren: God* (saith St. Paul) *sent forth his Son, born of a woman, that we might receive the privilege of being made sons:* and, *Children* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *partake of flesh and blood;*[x] whence (as he meaneth to infer) our Lord being the Son of God, we upon conjunction of nature with him, and as his brethren, become also such: he further intimateth, that upon this score we do surpass angels themselves; for that *he took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the seed of Abraham;*[y] they were not, as we, dignified with a fraternal relation to the Son of God.

In so many several respects is God our Father; we are his children, as being his creatures, made, preserved, and maintained by him; as we are intellectual creatures, being placed in degree and quality of nature so near him; as we by virtue and goodness (produced in us by his grace) do anywise approach him, resemble him, and partake of his special favour; as we are Christians, adopted into his heavenly family, renewed by his holy grace, and destinated to a participation of his eternal glory.

Now the consideration of these grounds (each one of them, and all of them together), upon which this relation of God unto us is founded, hath manifold good uses; it is apt to inform and admonish us concerning many necessary duties resulting from it; and to enforce upon us the practice of them.

1. It in general may teach, and should mind us, what reverence, honour, and observance, is due from us unto God, in equity and justice, according to ingenuity and gratitude: *If* (saith God in the prophet) *I be a Father, where is my honour?*[z] Our believing and acknowledging this relation is vain, if we do not yield the respects, and perform the duties answerable thereto. And if indeed we are obliged to love, to respect, to observe those, who have been the instruments of God in producing, in nourishing, in breeding us, how much more are we bound to yield the same to him, who principally did, who continually doth, bestow upon us our being, together with all the supports, the conveniences, the comforts thereof; from whose free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this transitory life, but the inestimable privileges and blessings relating to the future incomparably better state? If we neglect our duty so grounded, may not God justly expostulate with us, as he did of old with those children of his: *Do*

[s] 1 John iii. 2. [t] 1 Cor. xv. 49.
[u] 2 Cor. iii. 18; Phil. iii. 21.
[v] Luke xx. 35, 36; Matt. xix. 28.
[w] Gal. iv. 7; Rom. viii. 17; Col. iii. 24; Heb. ix. 15; 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.
[x] Phil. ii. 7; Rom. viii. 3, 29; Gal. iv. 4, 5; Heb. ii. 11, 14.
[y] Heb. ii. 16. [z] Mal. i. 6.

ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise: Is he not thy Father, who bought thee?[a] (or rather, who got thee, ὃς ἐκτήσατό σε, saith the Greek; and both that and the Hebrew do agree in expression of that thing with our common manner of speech;) *hath not he made thee, and established thee?* It is, as is there intimated, a part of extreme folly, no less than of injustice and ingratitude, to disregard and disobey him, to whom by such bands of duty and obligation we are allied: indeed the excellency of God's nature doth justly require honour and reverence to him; his sovereign power may also reasonably extort obedience from us; but his paternal benevolence and beneficence are the most obliging grounds, the most kindly inducements, to the practice of all piety toward him: we are foolishly unworthy in not being good on the other accounts; in not being so for these reasons, we are monstrously base.

2. This consideration may instruct and admonish us what we should be, and how we should behave ourselves; for that, if we be God's children, it becometh us, and we are obliged, in our disposition and demeanour, to resemble, to imitate him: it is natural and proper for children to resemble their parents in their complexion and countenance; to imitate them in their actions and carriage: *If ye* (argueth our Lord) *were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham;*[b] ye would imitate him in readily believing and obeying God: and, *Ye* (saith he again) *are of your father the Devil, because ye perform the lusts of your father;* because in his envious, treacherous, murderous disposition and practice, ye resemble him: so if we be God's children, we must, according to St. Paul's exhortation, *imitate God, as dear children;*[c] we must, in all imitable perfections, strive to be like him; so doth the scripture frequently (both in general, and as to particular cases or matters) apply and inculcate this point: God is holy and pure, so therefore ought we to be; *As obedient children* (saith St. Peter) *not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;*[d] and, *That* (saith St. Paul) *ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke* (or irreprehensible sons of God), *in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation;*[e] and, *Beloved, now are we the sons of God* (saith St. John), subjoining—*and every one that hath this hope* (a hope grounded upon, or springing from, such a relation) *purifieth himself, as God is pure:*[f] God is perfectly just and righteous, thence we likewise should labour to be such; for, *Every one* (saith St. John) *that doeth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous:*[g] God is perfect in all goodness; so must we endeavour to be, as our Saviour enjoineth us; *Be ye* (saith he) *therefore perfect, as your Father is perfect:*[h] God is bountiful, gracious, and merciful unto all; we thence should learn to be so also; *I say unto you* (they are our Saviour's lessons to us), *Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust:*[i] and again; *Love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil; be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.*[j] So are we admonished by the holy writers of our engagements to be good on this account. And reason indeed showeth this relation to be inconsistent with our being otherwise; for similitude only can preserve cognation;* things very unlike become formally different in kind and nature thereby; diversity of manners signify a difference in blood: if, therefore, we be closely affixed to material things, or pronely addicted to brutish pleasures, how can we be the children of him, that is purely spiritual, altogether intellectual? If we be fierce,

[a] Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.
[b] John viii. 39, 44.
[c] Eph. v. 1.
[d] 1 Pet i. 14.
[e] Phil. ii. 15.
[f] 1 John iii. 2, 3.
[g] 1 John iii. 7.
[h] Matt. v. 48.
[i] Matt. v. 44.
[j] Luke vi. 35.

* Τὸ ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ φύσει συγγενές ἐστι.—Plat. Protag.

hardhearted, unmerciful, or uncharitable, how can we claim kindred with him, who is all love and benignity, all munificence and mercy? There can be no affinity in relation, where there is such a dissimilitude in nature: God also cannot deal with us as children, cannot affect or like us, if we do not resemble him; he can only love good men, and the most certain κριτήριον (the most perfect rule, the most evident mark) by which we can discern or distinguish what goodness is, is conformity to God's nature, discovered by his actions; for that cannot otherwise than be very good, wise and reasonable, comely and commendable, convenient and beneficial to us, wherein we resemble God; God's example cannot misguide us, his law and his practice ever consent, his will and nature cannot disagree; nothing, therefore, can more please him than what is like him; as even Plato could observe: *What practice* (saith he) *is acceptable and suitable to God? One; even that, which the old saying implies, Like is ever a friend to like.** Nothing likewise is more certainly bad, or more displeasing to God, than that which rendereth us in our complexion of mind, or in our behaviour, unlike to God: we by being such, or doing so, must necessarily fall from this high dignity, must *ipso facto* forfeit this excellent privilege of being thus related to God; we thereby become exiles and aliens from his name and family; we prove rebels and foes, instead of sons and friends, unto him.

3. This consideration may raise us to a just regard, esteem, and valuation of ourselves; may consequently inspire noble thoughts, and breed generous inclinations in us; may withdraw us from mean, base, and unworthy designs or practices; may excite and encourage us to handsome, brave, worthy resolutions and undertakings, suitable to the dignity of our nature, the nobleness of our descent, the eminency of so high a relation, of so near an alliance to God: even natural light dictateth this use of the notion, and heathen philosophers do apply it: *If any one* (saith Epictetus) *could be affected with this opinion, that we are all originally descended from God, and that God is both the Father of men and gods, he would not, I suppose, conceive any thing ignoble or mean concerning himself; If Cæsar should adopt thee, none could endure thy superciliousness; and if thou knowest that thou art God's son, shall it not elevate thy mind?* So that great philosopher discourseth. And St. Austin[k] relateth this discourse of Varro, the most learned Roman of his time: *It is* (said he) *useful for cities, that valiant men should* (*although it be false*) *believe themselves born of the Gods, that their minds thence bearing a confidence of their Divine extraction, may more boldly undertake great enterprises, pursue them more earnestly, and hence accomplish them more happily, from the security this conceit produceth.* Shall we, then, who in so many respects are so highly born, and of so illustrious an extraction (we that are allied to God by our intelligent nature, that are by the heavenly seed of Christian regeneration more deeply implanted int his stock), so far debase ourselves, ast effect and pursue trivial, abject, dishonourable things? Are we not ashamed of so vile a degeneracy? Can we dare so to disparage our high relations? God our heavenly Father; Christ our elder brother; the holy angels and blessed saints, our kindred in nature, our brethren in grace? Shall we not be afraid for such unworthiness to be degraded, to be rejected, to be disinherited by our holy Father; who is jealous of his honour, who cannot brook to have his blood so stained and defiled, or that such blots and disgraces should stick to his lineage; that his image impressed on us should be so deformed and disfigured; that such disorders and misbehaviours should be committed in his family? If we do not behave ourselves as children, he hath declared that he will disavow and cast us off from being so: *Every plant* (our Saviour telleth us) *that beareth not good fruit, he loppeth it from his stock, and casteth it away.*[l]

4. This consideration is an especial motive to humility, apt to depress vain conceit and confidence in ourselves: for, if we are God's children, so as to have

* Τίς πράξις φίλη, καὶ ἀκόλουθος Θεῷ; μία, καὶ ἕνα ἔχουσα ἀρχαῖον λόγον, ὅτι τῷ ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον φίλον ἂν εἴη.—Plato de Leg. 4.

[k] Aug. de Civ. D. iii. 4.

[l] 1 John xv. 2, 6.

received our beings, all our powers and abilities, all our goods and wealth, both internal and external, both natural and spiritual, from his free disposal, so as to be continually preserved and maintained by his providence, to depend for all our subsistence upon his care and bounty; what reason can we have to assume or ascribe any thing to ourselves? How vain is it to rely upon any strength or wisdom, any possession or endowment we have or seem to have? How extremely fond are we, if we be raised in our conceit, or are ambitious of reputation, upon the score of any such things? for, *Who* (as the apostle invincibly discourseth) *made thee to differ? what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?*[m] To him alone, who is the Author and Donor of all good things; To the Fountain of all power, all joy, all blessings; to *the Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift descendeth;*[n] all praise and glory is due.

5. This consideration showeth us the reason we have to submit entirely to the providence of God, with contentedness and acquiescence in every condition; for seeing we are *God's possessions* (*Θεοῦ κτήματα*, as Plato[o] calleth us), he having made us whatever we are, according to all accounts and capacities, whether as men by his common providence, or as Christians by his especial grace; he surely hath the best right and title that can be upon us; he may justly dispose of us and use us as he thinks good; we may well thence be obliged, according to the apostolical precept, *to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's;*[p] if we repine at or complain of God's dealing with us, may he not justly return to us that answer in the gospel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*[q] Shall we not suffer God to order his own family according to his discretion and pleasure; to assign what station, to allow what portion he pleaseth to his own children, without our offence or displeasure? shall we pretend to know better than he what is fit to be done? shall we claim a right to dispense his goods, or desire to be carvers for ourselves? If it be unjust and unreasonable to do thus, then in all reason we ought to be content in every state that he disposeth us into, and to undergo patiently whatever he imposeth on us; yea we have reason to be more than content with every thing incident, not only as justly proceeding from him, but as presumable to be good and convenient for us; for is it not fit that we should think that God will order things for the best good of his own children? can we conceive that he willingly will hurt, or will not rather help them; that he will design them any mischief, yea that he will easily suffer it? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may* (God telleth us) *forget; yet he will not forget us:*[r] sooner indeed may the most tender parents become unnaturally regardless, spiteful, and cruel toward their children, than the immutable God (who in his nature is unexpressibly benign and compassionate) shall neglect the good of his offspring: good reason therefore have we to be satisfied with all that befalleth us.

6. Particularly this consideration obligeth us to be patient and cheerful in the sorest afflictions, as deeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed for, and tending to our good: *Thou shalt* (saith God to the Israelites) *consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee:*[s] and, *We* (saith the apostle) *have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit that we might be partakers of his holiness.*[t] The punishments inflicted on us by men may perhaps proceed from passion; but God assuredly never inflicts any thing grievous on us, but out of pure good-will: and what sweeter consolation can there be, than to know that the most cross and distasteful accidents befalling us do (according to the intention of him that bringeth

[m] 1 Cor. iv. 7.
[n] James i. 17; John iii. 27; 1 Chron. xxix. 14, 15.
[o] Plat. in Phæd.
[p] 1 Cor. vi. 20.
[q] Matt. xx. 15.
[r] Isa. xlix. 15.
[s] Deut. viii. 5.
[t] Heb. xii. 9, 10.

them on us, and manageth them,) conduce to our profit, and shall in the event, if we do patiently receive them, and by our untowardness do not hinder their effect, prove wholesome and advantageous to us?

7. This consideration doth also show the reason we have to obey those precepts which enjoin us to rely upon God's providence; *to cast all our burden and care upon God; to be solicitous* and anxious about nothing which concerneth our sustenance;[u] for children commonly (especially such as have able and kind parents) do live altogether void of care concerning their maintenance, being assured that their parents will concern themselves to provide whatever is necessary or convenient for them: and how much more have we reason to live free of solicitude in such respects, who have a Father so infinitely sufficient to supply all our wants, and so tenderly affected toward us; so ever present with us, and always vigilant over us; who cannot but see and know our needs; and can most easily satisfy them, and is no less willing and ready, if we trust in him, to do it? *Do not* (saith our Lord) *take care, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?—for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*[v] The like reason did even natural light suggest to a philosopher: *If* (saith he) *kindred with Cæsar, or with any other great man in Rome, is sufficient to make a man live securely, without contempt, and without fear, will not the having God our Maker and Father and Guardian, free us from griefs and fears?*[w] It is extreme infidelity concerning either the providence of God, or his power, or his goodness (that is, the practical disbelief of this point, or in our hearts disavowing God to be our Father), which causeth all that carking and distraction of mind, that fear of wants, that grief for losses and disappointments, which do commonly possess men, together with those covetous desires and unjust practices, with which the world aboundeth: he can hardly be guilty of them, who believeth and considereth, that God doth thus stand related and affected toward him.

8. This consideration doth more generally in all regards serve to breed and cherish our faith, to raise our hope, to quicken our devotion; for whom shall we confide in, if not in such a Father? from whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath already given us so much, even all that we have? to whom can we have recourse freely and cheerfully, upon any occasion, if not to him, who so kindly inviteth and calleth us to him, in so endearing terms, with so obliging an appellation? If we in any need, corporal or spiritual, request succour or supply from him, can we suspect that such a Father (so infinitely wise, so able, so good) will refuse us, or can fail us? No; *What man is there of us, that if his son ask him bread, will give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If we then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall your Father in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*[x] So doth our Saviour with most convincing force of reason move us to the duty of prayer, with faith and confidence of good success. St. Luke hath it, *how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*[y] implying, that, upon account of this relation, we may in all our spiritual needs (if we do need light and direction in our doubts, or strength against temptations, or comfort in our distresses) be assured of finding requisite assistance and relief. We should therefore, upon all exigencies, address ourselves to God, not with the fear of slaves, nor with the suspicion of strangers, but with dispositions of heart suitable to children, with a reverent love, and humble confidence, and cheerful hope.

9. Lastly, considering this point will direct and prompt us how to behave ourselves towards all God's creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities: if God be the Father of all things, they are all thence in some sort our brethren, and so may claim from us a fraternal affection and demeanour answerable thereto. Shall we then scorn, abuse, trample or tyrannize over any of them? doth it become us to do so? will our common Father like it, or endure it?

[u] Matt. vi. 25; Phil. iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 7; Psal. xxxvii. 5; lv. 23.

[v] Matt. vi. 31, 32.

[w] Epict. Arr. i. 9.

[x] Matt. vii. 9, 10, 11.

[y] Luke xi. 13.

If we are all branches sprouting from one stock, or streams issuing from the same source of Divine beneficence and fecundity; if we are members of one body, of one commonwealth, of one family, we are then surely obliged to an universal benevolence; to be kind and compassionate, to be helpful and beneficial unto all, so far as our capacity reacheth; we are to endeavour, as we can, to preserve the order and promote the welfare of the world, and of all things in it: even upon this score the meanest of God's creatures is not to be despised, the vilest worm is not to be misused by us; since even it is the work of his hands, and the subject of his care, yea the object of his kindness, *who* (as the Psalmist telleth us) *is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works:*[z] but especially toward those beings, who according to a more peculiar and excellent sense are entitled the sons of our Father, and to whom we are more nearly allied by our better part (that Divine breath, which both they and we drew from God,*) toward all intellectual beings, we do learn hence our respective duties: of love and respect toward those our elder brethren, the angels (those of them which have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty;) of charity and good-will toward each other; which if we do not maintain, we may consider that we thereby are first undutiful and unkind to God our common Father, and then even to ourselves; we do hate and harm both God's relations and our own (God's children, and our brethren) by hating or harming any man whatever;† especially any good man, any Christian brother; who by other more peculiar bands is straightly tied to us; who upon so many better and higher accounts standeth related unto God and to ourselves.‡ Aristotle saith that all men, upon grounds of natural cognation and similitude, are naturally friends to one another;* much more are all good men so by participation of a more excellent nature, and by a nobler resemblance; whence it is St. Paul's precept to Christians,[a] that they should be *τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ, εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι*, that they should *bear a natural affection each to other in brotherly love:* Christians are in a more peculiar and eminent manner styled brethren; and that charity, which in respect to others is called *philanthropy* (or humanity), in regard to them is named *philadelphy* (or brotherly affection:) hence to perform all fraternal offices toward every Christian, to wish heartily and earnestly to promote his good, to compassionate, and, as we are able, to relieve his evils, to bear his infirmities, and to comport with unkindnesses from him, and the like duties, are incumbent on us, as peculiar to our profession.

These are the principal uses which the consideration of this point suggesteth. Now God Almighty, the great Father of all things, and especially our gracious Father in Christ Jesus, grant that by his holy grace we may perform all filial duty toward him (rendering unto him all love and reverence, all praise and thanks, all worship and obedience, together with all faith and hope in him), that we may behave ourselves in all things as becometh this relation, that we may resemble him in all goodness, that we may persist here continually in his favour, and obtain hereafter the blessed inheritance from him; this he of infinite mercy vouchsafe unto us, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. *Amen.*

Even to God the Father, the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all things, the Author and Donor of all good; to God the Son, the Redeemer of all the world, and foundation of all spiritual blessings; to God the Holy Ghost, the fountain of all true goodness, joy, and comfort, be for ever and ever all glory and praise. Amen.

* Συγγενὴς πᾶν τὸ λογικόν.—Ant, iii. 4.

Συγγενὴς, οὐχὶ αἵματος, καὶ σπέρματος τοῦ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ νοῦ, καὶ θείας ἀπομοίρας μέτοχος.—Ant. ii. 1.

† Si ab uno Deo inspirati omnes, et animati sumus, quid aliud quam fratres sumus, et quidem conjunctiores quod animis, quam qui corporibus: ergo pro belluis immanibus habendi sunt, qui hominibus nocent.—*Lact.* x. 6.

‡ Ἀνδράποδον, οὐκ ἀνέξῃ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου, ὃς ἔχει Δία πρόγονον.—Epict. Arr. i. 13.

[z] Psal. cxlv. 9, 16.

* Οἰκεῖον ἅπας ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ, καὶ φίλον.—Arist. Eth. viii. 1.

[a] Rom. xii. 10.

The Father Almighty.

SERMON XI.

REV. xi. 17.—*O Lord God Almighty.*

EVERY attribute of God is a proper and useful object of our consideration; as being apt to mind us of our duty, and to excite us to the practice thereof; to beget in us those dispositions of mind (that love and reverence toward God, that faith and hope in him) which we ought to have; and to draw from us real performances of obedience to him: each of them doth ground obligations to piety, and yieldeth arguments to the practice thereof; to which purposes, that considering this divine attribute, *Almighty* (mentioned in our text), doth much avail, and that it therefore well deserveth to be pressed upon us, will appear more distinctly from the application we shall make thereof: at present we may perceive how considerable it is, by observing in gross, 1. That it is frequently in holy scripture singled forth, as most proper to God; as most fully expressive of his glorious excellency and majesty; particularly the most illuminate ministers of God's praise, the seraphims in Isaiah, the four wights (or living creatures) in this book; and the twenty-four elders in this place, do therefore use it.[a] 2. It is that attribute, which is alone most expressly set down in our Creed, as especially necessary to be believed and considered: we say therein, I believe in God the Father Almighty. 3. It is that with which we daily address our devotions unto God; in our prayers we say, *Almighty and most merciful Father;* in our praises we cry, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty*, or (which is the same) *Lord God of Sabaoth.* It seems therefore fit and useful, that we should well understand the proper and full meaning thereof, together with the obligations grounded thereon, and the inducements it affordeth to good practice; that so when we hear it used in scripture, when we profess to believe it, when we apply it to God in our devotions, we may so reflect thereupon, as to be admonished of our duty, and moved to the performance thereof. First therefore I will endeavour somewhat to explain it; then shall make a practical application thereof.

The title, epithet, or attribute παντοκράτωρ, which we (finding no other word more properly and fully to express it) do render *Almighty*, or omnipotent, is frequently in a manner peculiar and characteristical ascribed to God: the use thereof in the New Testament is, by citation or imitation, transferred from the Greek of the Old, where it serveth to express those two famous and usual names of God, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai:** especially it answereth to the former; for the latter is only rendered thereby in some places of the Book of Job: but the former, *Sabaoth*, (when interpreted and not left in its own sound), is constantly rendered παντοκράτωρ. I call *Sabaoth* a name of God; for that it is so, it is in several places expressly affirmed: as in Jeremiah; *Their Redeemer is strong, Jehovah Sabaoth is his name:* and in Isaiah; *For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; the Lord of hosts is his name:* and in Amos; *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought—Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his name,*[b] (from a sort of Jove, called Ζεὺς Ζαββάσιος, mentioned in some pagan writers,[c] was, as some critics suppose, deduced. Now as all the names and appellations of God are significant, and denote some perfection, or some prerogatives belonging to him, (as *Jehovah* signifieth his self-subsistence, independency, immutability, and eternity; *Elohim* his omnipotence; *Shaddai* his all-sufficiency; *Adonai* his supreme dominion and authority), so doth this name or title, *Sabaoth* primitively seem to import God's universal conduct and managery of all creatures: for all things in the world, as being ranged in a goodly and convenient order (like an army marching in array, or marshalled to battle), are called armies, or *Sabaoth.*—Thus, (after the history of the creation it

[a] Isa. vi. 3; Rev. iv. 8.

* Ὀλβιοι ἀνέρες, οἷς Σαβαὼθ νόον ἐσθλὸν ἔδωκεν. —Vers. Sibyl. lib. 1.

[b] Jer. l. 34; Isa. xlviii. 2; Amos iv. 13.

[c] Cicero, Aristoph. &c.; Seld. de Diis. S. cap. 3.

is said) *The heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them,*[d] (πᾶς κόσμος αὐτῶν, all the furniture, or all the battalion of them:) and, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made*[e] (saith the Psalmist) *and all the host of them:* and, *Bless the Lord all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure;*[f] that is, all creatures which are subject to his command, and subservient to his will: and, *Lift up* (saith Isaiah) *your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things; that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth:*[g] where God is represented to us as the general of an army, drawing forth and ordering his creatures, as a general summoneth to a rendezvous, mustereth and embattleth his troops: hence this title of *Sabaoth*, which is rendered παντοκράτωρ, doth seem derived.

But we need not deal so strictly, as to limit the sense of this word, according to its original rise, or its use in translation; but since it hath been authenticated by its use in the holy fountains of truth, the Old and New Testament, and is there used so as to signify or imply the sum of Divine perfections and pre-eminences; being, as it seems, selected especially for that purpose, we may presume to take it in its common latitude, for ὁ πάντων κρατῶν, or ὁ πάντων κράτος ἔχων; according to which extent, it may have various importances, somewhat different; it may accordingly denote, 1. right, or authority, over all beings, *omni-potestas;* and, 2. a power, or ability, to do all things, *omni-potentia;* 3. the actual exercise of such authority, and such power in ruling and disposing all things; *omni-potentatus;* 4. the possession of all things; or the containing and holding all things in his hand; *omni-tenentia* (it is St. Augustine's word:) 5. the preservation or upholding of all things in their being and state: for the word κρατεῖν, according to its propriety and ordinary use, may infer and ground all these significations; and according to them all, God is truly παντοκράτωρ. Let us survey the particulars, and show how God, especially in holy scripture, is represented in respect to them.

1. God is παντοκράτωρ, as having a just right and authority over all things; he naturally is the sovereign Lord and Emperor of the world; for whatever imaginable reason or ground there is of authority, doth in respect to all things agree unto God.[h] Aristotle, in his Politics, discourseth thus: Government doth aim at and tend to the mutual benefit of the governor and governed; he, therefore, who is most able and best disposed to provide for and procure the common benefit, is according to natural reason and justice (secluding other considerations of laws and compacts, of former constitutions, of present possession, and the like) to be the governor; or he deserves, and is fit to be so, and (no other reason hindering) becometh such (*That*, saith the philosopher, *which naturally is apt or able to provide, doth naturally rule, and naturally lordeth:**) whence the soul hath a right to govern the body; and men naturally do rule over beasts; and were there any such persons, as did without any question very eminently exceed others in wisdom and goodness, to them, according to natural congruity, the government of others would appertain; the common advantage so requiring: and if such excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, then God, who in wisdom and goodness doth incomparably surpass all things, hath assuredly the right to govern all: so a pagan author could discourse; *There is* (saith Cicero) *nothing better than God; therefore it is necessary the world should be ruled by him:*† he is the *only wise*, as (St. Paul telleth us), and thence most able; he is *only good*[i] (as our Saviour teacheth us), and thence most apt to manage all things for the general welfare and benefit of the world. If also eminency of power doth qualify for dominion (as it surely doth; for that which cannot be withstood must in reason be submitted to; it is vain to question that authority, which by force altogether irresistible can assert and

[d] Gen. ii. 1.
[e] Psal. xxxiii. 6.
[f] Psal. ciii. 21.
[g] Isa. xl. 26.

* Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προορᾶν, ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει.

† Nihil est præstantius Deo; ab eo igitur necesse est mundum regi.—*Cic. de N. D.* 2.

[h] 1 Tim. vi. 6.
[i] Rom. xvi. 17; Luke xviii. 19.

maintain itself;) God hath the only right, nothing in the world being able to contest his title; for, *Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee?*[j] says the holy Psalmist contemplating this Divine attribute: all things are weak and feeble in comparison; are altogether in his hand and under his feet; are thoroughly at his discretion and disposal: *The Lord* (saith the prophet) *is the true God, and the everlasting King; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation:*[k] and, *How terrible* (saith the Psalmist) *art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee—He ruleth by his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves.*[l]

If also to have made all things, and to preserve them, doth create a right of governing (as it must needs do so; for what can we justly challenge a dominion over, if not over our own works, over that which we continually keep and nourish; over that which altogether depends upon us, and which subsists at our pleasure?) then well may the Apocalyptical elders thus acknowledge: *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power,*[m] (that is, to possess the royal majesty and sovereign dominion over the world;) *for thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are, and were created:* well might *every creature that is in the heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and those things which are in the sea, and all things in them, cry out there; To him that sitteth upon the throne* (*and to the Lamb*) *be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion** *for ever and ever:*[n] well might king Hezekiah say, *O Lord of hosts—thou art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth:*[o] and the Levites in Nehemiah, *Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven and earth; the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth, and all things that are therein; the sea, and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all; and all the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*[p] Thus is God παντοκράτωρ: as he is upon all imaginable accounts, and according to all reasonable grounds of right, the rightful Sovereign of all things; as he is *Divumque hominumque potestas*, as the wisest poet doth acknowledge and style him.[q]

2. He is also such in regard to his infinite power, as that word may signify omnipotent. Natural light affordeth pregnant arguments of the greatness of his power, displayed in the constitution and conservation of the world; his disposing so stupendously vast, so unconceivably various creatures into so comely and stable a posture, whence *his eternal power and divinity are discerned,*[r] as St. Paul telleth us; for he that could effect so much, his power must needs be far greater than we can imagine or comprehend: to natural light, I say, it is incomprehensibly great, and exceedeth all definite limits; but holy scripture more clearly and fully declareth the extent of his power; asserting, that it is not only in respect to our weak conceit and narrow capacity, but in itself, truly infinite, reaching the utmost possibility of things: it teacheth us, that whatever is not contrary to his nature, or to his essential perfections (to his goodness, fidelity, holiness, wisdom;) which it doth not misbecome him to do; or which is not repugnant to the nature of things to be done (that is, which doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is impossible, and becomes no object of power; for such things *he cannot do, because he is omnipotent;* as St. Austin acutely says;* he is able with perfect ease and facility to achieve it: there is among things good and possible nothing so difficult, but he can perform it; nothing so strong or stubborn, but he can subdue it: *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?*[s] said God to Abraham, when Sarah doubted, or wondered concerning the promise, that she in so extreme an age should become fruitful: *Behold* (said the prophet Jere-

* τὸ πράτος.

[j] Psal. lxxxix. 6, 8.
[k] Jer. x. 10.
[l] Psal. lxvi. 3, 7.
[m] Rev. iv. 11.
[n] Rev. v. 13.
[o] Isa. xxxvii. 16.

* Deus propterea quædam non potest, quia omnipotens est.—*Aug. de Civ. D.* v. 10.

[p] Neh. ix. 6.
[q] Virgil 19.
[r] Rom. i. 20.
[s] Gen. xviii. 14.

miah in his prayer) *thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and thy stretched out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee:*[t] οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει Θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα· *Nothing* (that can be said, or conceived, or performed) *shall be impossible to God,*[u] if he pleaseth to design or undertake it, said the angel to the blessed Virgin, when he delivered so strange a message to her concerning an event so wonderful and supernatural, as our Saviour's conception of her: that a rich man should be induced entirely to comply with God's will, and willingly to part with all, our Saviour affirmed exceedingly difficult (hardly any thing could be supposed more difficult; harder it was than *for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle;*) but to satisfy his disciples' scruple thence arising, he subjoins: *With men* (or according to the common sense of men) *this is impossible, but to God all things are possible: In thine hand* (said king Jehoshaphat) *there is power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee:*[v] and king Nebuchadnezzar having felt an experiment of his power, and being returned to a right understanding, confesseth thus: *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? The Lord of hosts* (saith the prophet) *hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?*[w] To stop the sun in his career, to make the sea stand upon an heap, to draw streams of water from a rock, to restrain fire from burning, to restore the blind and lame, to raise the dead, to suspend, thwart, invert the course of nature, with all such things which we so wonder at, and term miracles, are comparatively but slender, and, as it were, perfunctory instances of his power; for with the greatest ease, by the least exertion of his power, by a thought, a look, a touch, a word, the greatest things are performed: *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke: He overturneth the mountains in his anger, and shaketh the earth out of her place: The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.*[x] These seem great and strange effects of power; yet in respect to what he can do, and hath done, they are small; for he at first made the whole world with a word; so the history of the creation expresseth it, and so the Psalmist telleth us: *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth;*[y] and by a word he doth preserve it, *upholding* (as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) *all things by the word of his power,*[z] or by his powerful word; and by a word he can destroy and annihilate all things; yea, more easily, in a manner, he can do it, even by his mere silence, or by withdrawing that salutary breath, by virtue of which all things subsist: *Thou hidest thy face* (saith the Psalmist), *they are troubled; thou withholdest thy breath, they die, and return to their dust.*[a] For we may consider, that in this respect also God is all-powerful, as being the source from which all power is derived, by which all power is sustained, upon which all power doth depend; he not only can do all things inclusively, but exclusively, or so that nothing can be done without him: that of our Saviour, *Without me ye can do nothing,*[b] is not only true in spiritual, but in all other matters: *He* (as St. Paul preached at Athens) *giveth life,* (or being, with all vital faculties) *and breath* (that is, all natural powers) *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather, by him) *we live, and move, and have our being;*[c] that is, whatever we are, whatever we have, whatever we can do, doth proceed from him, doth depend upon him. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, as all-powerful.

3. God is also so, by reason that he doth actually exercise all dominion, and doth exert his power continually, according to his good pleasure: he not only hath a just title to govern all things, and a perfect ability to sway in all matters, but he constantly useth them: *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all: God is the King of all the earth; God reigneth*

[t] Jer. xxxii. 17, 27. [u] Luke i. 37.
[v] Matt. xix. 26; 2 Chron. xx. 6.
[w] Dan. iv. 35; Isa. xiv. 27.
[x] Psal. xviii. 7, 8; Job ix. 5; xxvi. 11.
[y] Psal. xxxiii. 6, 9. [z] Heb. i. 3.
[a] Psal. civ. 29; Job xxxiv. 14, 20.
[b] John xv. 5. [c] Acts xvii. 24, 28.

over the heathen (or the nations;) *God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness: the Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens: Who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth?*[d] It is indeed, as the holy man saith, a great condescension in God, that he will vouchsafe to have the inspection and administration of things so much inferior to him; yet for the common good of his creatures he is pleased to do it: *Thine* (saith king David), *O Lord, is the kingdom, and thou art exalted as head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; in thine hand is power and might*,[e] &c. He is indeed the only Governor, absolutely, originally, and independently so; ὁ μόνος δυνάστης, *the only Potentate*,[f] as St. Paul calleth him; all authority and power are imparted by him, and subordinate to him; from his disposal and direction all potentates do receive them; in his name and behalf, by virtue of his commission and command, as his delegates and ministers, for his honour, interest, and service, they administer any just dominion or power. It was Nebuchadnezzar's doom to be driven from men, until he did understand and embrace this truth, so necessary for all governors to know and consider; that, *The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will;* that, *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him: Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the Judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another: There is no power but from God; the powers that are, are appointed by God: The judgment is God's*[g] (as Moses said in his charge to the judges of Israel), being exercised by his order, and in his behalf. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, *as the only absolute* sovereign Lord, the Author and Fountain of all just authority, *the Lord of lords, and King of kings*,[h] as the scripture often doth style him.

4. God is also παντοκράτωρ, as the true proprietary and just possessor of all things. *Blessed be Abraham* (said king Melchizedek) *of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:* and, *Behold* (saith Moses to his people), *the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God; the earth also, with all that is therein:*[i] and, *The earth* (saith the Psalmist) *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods:*[j] and, *The heavens* (saith he again) *are thine, the earth also is thine; as for the world and the fulness thereof*[k] (that is, all which the world contains, all with which it is furnished and replenished), *thou hast founded them:* and, *The sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.*[l] All things, they say, are the goods and possessions of God; proving it from hence, that he made them, and thereby acquired a propriety in them: for there is no more evident and perfect ground of propriety than this. The products of our invention and care, the fruits of our endeavour and industry, even we do think that reasonably we may call our own, and justly claim the enjoyment of: how much more he, that by an original, uncommunicated, independent wisdom and power, hath contrived and produced all things! From thence surely doth result such a title to them all, that the entire and absolute disposal of them doth appertain to him; so that he may apply them, as the potter doth the vessels which he maketh (it is the scripture comparison), to what use he thinketh good;[m] that he may freely place and bestow them where he pleaseth; that he may take them away, or transfer them, when he seeth fit: they can never be so alienated from him, that the enjoyment of them doth not wholly depend on him, and that at pleasure (his wisdom and goodness permitting, his truth and word being solved) he may not resume them to himself.

5. God is also παντοκράτωρ, as containing and comprehending all things by his immense presence and infinite capaci-

[d] Psal. ciii. 19; xlvii. 7, 8; cxiii. 4.
[e] 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12. [f] 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[g] Dan. iv. 25; ii. 21; vii. 27; Psal. lxxv. 6, 7; Rom. xiii. 1; John xix. 11.
[h] Rev. xix. 16; Deut. x. 17; Psal. cxxxvi. 3.
[i] Gen. xiv. 19; Deut. x. 14.
[j] Psal. xxiv. 1; l. 12. [k] Psal. lxxxix. 11.
[l] Psal. xcv. 5.
[m] Isa. xlv. 9; lxiv. 8; x. 15; Jer. xviii. 6; Rom. ix. 21.

ty: it is a name which the Jewish doctors commonly apply to God, *hamakom*,* the place, because all things do subsist in him; he being, as St. Hierome speaks, *infused through all things, and circumfused about all things; so as to penetrate them within, and to contain them without;* so as to be *within all things not included, and without all things not excluded:* and, *We do not* (saith Minutius Felix) *only live in the eye, but in the bosom of God.*† The whole world, how vast soever it seemeth to our narrow conceit, is but a drop, or as an atom of dust, in his hand: *Behold* (saith the prophet, elegantly and truly), *the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing; all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity:*[n] and, *I fill heaven and earth*, saith God in Jeremiah: and king Solomon in his prayer saith more; *Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee:* and, *Whither* (saith the Psalmist) *shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*[o]

6. Lastly, God is παντοκράτωρ in regard that he sustains and preserves all things.[p] *When* (saith St. Gregory Nyssen) *we hear the word* παντοκράτωρ, *we understand this, that God containeth all things in being;*‡ *Thou* (say the Levites in Nehemiah) *even thou, art God alone; thou hast made heaven and earth, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*[q]

In all these respects and senses doth the title παντοκράτωρ (which we for want of a word more adequate and expressive do render *Almighty*) belong to God: the Greek word, in the latitude of its signification, according to its etymology, comprehendeth all these senses, and the design in its use, as we before touched, warranteth the taking it in the largest acception; but however, it certainly respecteth the former senses, denoting the absolute universal sovereignty and the immense irresistible power of God: the belief and consideration of which particulars is of great importance, and may have a very useful influence upon our practice; for,

I. If God be the just Sovereign of all things, having a right to govern the world, and actually exercising it; then,

1. We see our condition and state here in this world. We live not in an anarchy, or in perfect liberty; we are not our own masters, or have a right to guide our actions according to our own will, or after our own fancy; but are under government;* a government most absolute and arbitrary; the laws whereof we may not dispute, the proceedings whereof we cannot resist. Whence,

2. We understand our duty; that as subjects and vassals we are obliged to render all awful reverence, worship, and obedience to God; humbly to adore the majesty, readily to perform the commands, and patiently to submit to the will of our great Sovereign; to conform all our actions to that heavenly law, under which we are born and live in the world. *We do not* (even Plutarch could tell us) *come hither into life to make laws, but to obey those which are appointed by God, who ordereth all things; to observe the decrees of Destiny and Providence.*†

3. Hence we may discern the heinousness of every sin, or transgression of God's law; it receiving great aggravation hence. It hence appeareth not only a matter of simple folly, or private incon-

* המקום.

† In omnibus infusus, et circumfusus, ut cuncta penetret interior, et contineat exterior.—*Hier. ad Marcell.* 5.

Intra omnia nec inclusus, extra omnia nec exclusus. Non solum in oculis Dei, sed in sinu vivimus.
Minut. F.

Solus est omnia; opus suum et extra, et intra tenet.—*Sen. Præf. Nat. Q.*

‡ Ὅταν τῆς παντοκράτωρ φωνῆς ἀκούομεν, τοῦτο νοοῦμεν, τὰ πάντα τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ εἶναι συνέχειν.—Greg. Nyss.

[n] Isa. xl. 15, 17; xlviii. 13; xl. 12.

[o] Jer. xxiii. 24; 1 Kings viii. 27; Psal. cxxxix. 7, &c.

[p] Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 3.

* Τραχὺς μόναρχος, καὶ οὐκ ὑπεύθυνος κρατεῖ.—Æsch.

† Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετήσαντες πάρεσμεν εἰς τὸν βίον, ἀλλὰ πεισόμενοι τοῖς διατεταγμένοις ὑπὸ τῶν τὰ ὅλα πρυτανευόντων θεῶν, καὶ τοῖς τῆς εἱμαρμένης, καὶ προνοίας θεσμοῖς.—Plut. Consul. ad Apol.

[q] Neh. ix. 6.

venience (contrary to our reason), but of public mischief and general ill consequence; being committed against the crown and dignity of God Almighty; against the peace and order of the world; which subsist by the observation of his laws. Every sin is an act of high rebellion, a breach of our natural allegiance, *a lifting up ourselves*,[r] as is said of Belshazzar, *against* our Sovereign; an infringing that right, and violating that honour of his, which he by his place and office is concerned to maintain and vindicate.

4. We may hence learn what reason we have to be content in every condition, and to undergo patiently every event befalling us: for that our station is allotted to us by an unquestionable right, and all things are dispensed to us by a common law, from which nothing can be exempted; for that things come not by a blind necessity or chance, but are disposed and managed by sovereign reason and wisdom. *We must* (saith an Ethnic philosopher) *not be displeased at any of these things; for we are come into that world, where we must live by these laws:* and, *A good man must needs be granted to be highly pious toward God; he therefore will sustain all accidents with equanimity; as knowimg them to happen unto him by a divine law, by which all things proceed.** It were indeed intolerable arrogance and frowardness in us to desire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are subject; to wish ourselves out of that order, in which the all-guiding Providence hath set us; to be dissatisfied with any thing, which by the Supreme Wisdom is assigned to us; it becometh us to say with old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*; to say upon all occasions with David, *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.*[s] Upon this consideration we should not only be satisfied with, and acquiesce in, but praise and adore all occurrences of Providence, how unkindly soever and distasteful they appear to us; supposing a just and reasonable cause to lie under them, although indiscernible to us.* Yea, further,

5. It is a matter of great consolation to reflect, that we and all the world are under such a government; it is a common felicity, it is our particular happiness, that we are so; for it is no unjust usurper, it is no merciless tyrant, it is no fond, no weak, no careless person, that we are in subjection to; but a most just, most mild, most gracious, most wise, most powerful, most vigilant Lord; who will deal most equally and most benignly with us; who sincerely and earnestly tenders our welfare; who is watchful and careful for our good; who is able to provide for all our needs, and to protect us from all mischief; all whose laws do only aim at our benefit; all whose proceedings toward us are full of equity, goodness, and truth; who will not only favourably accept, but most bountifully recompense our obedience; whom to serve and obey is a privilege far better and more desirable for us, than to be free, than to be wholly at our own disposal, and under our own guidance; the very nature and the end of his government being only to preserve us and to rescue us from the errors, the slaveries, the vexations and miseries we are apt to incur;[t] by virtue of whose universal dominion we are secured, that no malice of devils, no injustice of men, no sort of enemy whatever (excepting our own wilful disobedience to his laws and directions), shall be able to do us harm; for all them he governs and he curbs no less than ourselves. Of this our King it is truly said, that *justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face;* that, *he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings;* that, *The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre;* that, *His yoke is easy, and his burden light.*[u]

* Nihil horum indignandum est; in eum intravimus mundum, in quo hisl egibus vivitur. —*Sen. Ep.* 91.

Virum bonum concedas necesse est summæ pietatis erga Deos esse; itaque quicquid illi acciderit, æquo animo sustinebit, scit enim id accidisse lege divina, qua universa procedunt. *Sen. E.* 76.

[r] Num. xv. 30; Dan. v. 20.

[s] 1 Sam. iii. 18; Psal. xxxix. 9.

* Πάντα θαυμάζειν, πάντα ἐπαινεῖν, πάντα ἀνεξετάστως ἀποδέχεσθαι τὰ τῆς προνοίας ἔργα, κἂν φαίνεται πολλοῖς ἄδικα, διὰ τὸ ἄγνωστον εἶναι, καὶ ἀκατάληπτον τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν πρόνοιαν.—Damasc. de O. F. ii. 29.

[t] Deut. x. 12.

[u] Psal. lxxxix. 14; cxlv. 17; Rev. xv. 3; Psal. xlv. 6; Matt. xi 30.

In confidence of his protection we may say with the Psalmist, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? God is our refuge and strength—therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. In God have I put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.*[v] Well, therefore, may we, may the whole world, in consideration of our being under so good a Governor, be excited to joy and jubilation with the Psalmist: *O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph: for the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth. Say among the nations, that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved; he shall judge the plople righteously; let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad*, &c. *Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.*[w] Or with those in the Revelation: *Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour unto him.*[x] All the world hath exceeding reason not only to be content, but to rejoice and triumph in being subject to such a Governor, so able, so willing to mantain peace, good order, and equity therein: so that we also are obliged to bless and thank God, that he condescends so far, and vouchsafes to undertake the tuition and oversight of the world; obeying the Psalmist's exhortation: *The Lord* (saith he) *hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all:* therefore, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels—Bless the Lord, all his hosts—Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion;*[y] imitating herein those elders in the Revelation, who say, *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken unto thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*[z] They who imagine the world is not governed at all, but that with unloosed reigns it runneth on at random, are very foolish: but more such are they who wish it to be so, and in their desires depose God from his throne; for they do wish for anarchy and confusion in their country, instead of the most excellent establishment and order, maintained by the wisest and ablest government. That good emperor was better advised, and better affected, who said, *What good were it for me to live in a world void of a Deity and Providence?* and, *Why should I desire to continue in such a casual jumble and rout* of things?* The world, he well supposed, Divine governance being excluded, would be a strange, disorderly, and uncomfortable place to abide in. And old Socrates, in the *Phædon*, discoursing about his departure hence, comforts himself in that, as he hoped, he was going thither, where the gods did preside with a nearer inspection and a more apparent influence. These were worthy desires and noble hopes proceeding from natural reason and moral virtue in such persons; but much more reason and much greater obligation have we to be satisfied with, and to comfort ourselves in the assurance, that all things, even at present, here are moderated by a superintendency far more equal and more propitious than they could imagine or hope. These and such like practical uses the belief and consideration of God's sovereign authority and dominion do afford: the belief and consideration of God's immense and uncontrollable power is also of very great importance and influence upon practice.

1. It serveth to beget in us a due awe and dread of God: considering God's other attributes may breed in us a high esteem and hearty love of God; but the consideration of his power is that which naturally and reasonably produceth a great fear of him: he is most amiable for his goodness, and in regard to his wisdom greatly venerable; but his power, arming the rest, renders him exceedingly terrible. *Hear ye this* (it is said in the prophet Jeremiah) *O foolish people, and without understanding; Fear ye not me?*

[v] Psal. xxvii. 1, 2; xlvi. 1, 2; lvi. 4.
[w] Psal. xlvii. 1, 2; xcvi. 10; xcviii. 8.
[x] Rev. xix. 6.
[y] Psal. ciii. 19.
[z] Rev. xi. 17.

* Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν πόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κενῷ; —Ant. ii. § 11.

Τί καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ εἰκαίῳ συγκρίματι, καὶ φυρμῷ τοιοῦτῳ ἐνδιατρίβειν;—Idem vi. § 10.

saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which hath placed the sand for the bounds of the sea? &c. and, *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might: who would not fear thee, O thou King of nations?* and, *I will show you* (saith our Saviour) *whom ye should fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed* (or who beside killing) *hath power to cast into hell; I say unto you, Fear him:*[a] great reason he had so earnestly to inculcate that admonition, the case being so apparent and so important.

2. This point doth consequently in high measure dissuade and deter us from sin, implying the extreme folly in committing it, and the inevitable mischief following it. The consideration of God's other attributes infer it to be great baseness and stupidity to oppose or displease God, but the consideration of this demonstrateth it to be infinite madness to do so. For to wrong, dishonour, and displease him, that is so good and beneficent to us, is great disingenuity and unworthiness; to swerve from his advice and direction, who is only and perfectly wise, is highly vain and unreasonable; but for so feeble and impotent things as we are to contest with and withstand, to provoke and offend Omnipotency (that which with infinite ease can defeat and subdue us, can depress us into misery, can crush us into nothing), is most palpably the top of insolent wildness. It is Moses's argument, whereby he presseth obedience to his law, *Circumcise therefore* (saith he) *the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff necked; for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, and a mighty, and a terrible.*[b] It is no less an evidently convincing, than a vehemently affecting increpation, that of St. Paul, *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?* And God himself in Job useth the like scheme of speech; *Hast thou an arm Like God? and canst thou thunder with a voice like him?*[c] If thou art as strong, if thou hast such an arm, then mayest thou perhaps dare to contend with him, and adventure to provoke him: but if thou nowise art his match, if thou art infinitely short of him in strength, how vain and rash a thing it is for thee to defy him thus, to enter with him into the lists, to strive and grapple with him! to do as the sinner in Job is expressed doing: *He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.*[d] All presumptuous sinning is discribed and represented in scripture as a comparing, and in effect preferring, our power and force in regard to the power of God; or as a tempting God, and challenging him to battle; or as an actual coping, contention, and fighting with him: sinners, as such, are styled the adversaries of God, and rebels against him; such as rise up, and lift up themselves, and raise their hand against him; which doth either imply in them a more than gigantic pride and arrogance, in overvaluing their own power and undervaluing the power of God (which doth also involve infidelity, and disbelief of God's omnipotence; for he who believeth that, cannot take himself for God's match, or dare to struggle with him;) or it argueth a most strange inconsiderateness and vanity, in presuming, at so infinite a disadvantage, without any ground of confidence, without any hope of success, to oppose God's will and power. *Οὐ δηναιὸς, ὃς ἀθανάτοισι μάχοιτο*: *He is not long lived who fighteth with the immortals*, old Homer could tell us; the same which the prophet says, *Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker!* Nothing indeed can be more reasonable, than that advice of the Preacher, *Contend not with him that is mightier than thou;*[e] which in this case in effect is the same with this: Do not, by sinning, offend or provoke God.

3. Whence, likewise, the consideration of this point may dispose us to weigh our counsels, and thereupon not to adventure upon any unwarrantable resolution or design; there being so apparent reason to despair of success, an insuperable power being always ready to obstruct and cross us in the carriage of such designs, with whatever cunning laid, or backed with whatever might; for hence those sayings in scripture are manifestly verified: *There is no wisdom, nor understanding,*

[a] Jer. v. 21, 22; x. 6, 7; Luke xii. 5, Μετὰ τὸ ἀποκτεῖναι.
[b] Deut, x. 16, 17.
[c] 1 Cor. x. 22; Job xl. 9.
[d] Job xv. 25.
[e] Isa. xlv. 9; x. 5.

nor counsel against the Lord: and, *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper;* and, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?*[f]

4. It also, likewise, serveth to depress in us all confidence in ouselves, and in all other things, as to any security in them or succour from them: for all things in the world, though they conspire and combine together all their forces, will be altogether unable to support us, to assist us, to defend us against the Divine power, or indeed without it; they being all, otherwise than as maintained by him, infinitely feeble and frail: *Though hand join in hand* (that is, notwithstanding the conjunction of all powers whatever), *the wicked shall not be unpunished,*[g] saith the Wise man: and, *I kill* (saith God), *and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any thing that can deliver out of my hand:* and, *No king is saved by the multitude of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength; a horse is a vain thing for safety.*[h]

5. It therefore also may be of a special efficacy to quell and mortify in us the vices of pride, haughtiness, arrogance, self-will, stubbornness, and contumacy; since contemplating the power of God we cannot but perceive ourselves to be very pitiful, impotent, and insignificant things; who without permission cannot effect any thing; who cannot expect in any case to have our will; who have continually curbs in our mouths, and manacles on our hands; so that we cannot say or do any thing, cannot so much as stir, or endeavour any thing, without check or control; being under a predominant force, *which always resisteth the proud;* under the power of him who hath said, *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down;* whose character and peculiar work it is to *behold every one that is proud, and to abase him; to cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and to lay low the haughtiness of the terrible;* to *break the high arm,* and *to bring down the high looks;* and to *stain the pride of all glory.* Whence there is all the reason in the world that we should obey St. Peter's injunction, to *humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.*[i]

6. The consideration of God's omnipotence serveth to breed and nourish faith in God, as to the certain performance of his word and promises; for, let the accomplishment of them be to appearance never so difficult or improbable, yet he is able to perform them, and will therefore do it. *The Strength of Israel* (as Samuel said) *will not lie, nor repent:*[j] and, *Hath he said it, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken it, and shall he not make it good?* said Balaam, inspiredly: and, *The Lord of hosts* (saith Isaiah) *hath purposed it, and who shall disannul it? His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* and, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it:* and, *My word that goeth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; it shall prosper unto the thing whereunto I sent it:*[k] and, *The counsel of the Lord* (saith the Psalmist) *standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations: Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast:* and, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*[l] So doth God assert his immutable fidelity, and considering his indefectible power doth asure us that we may rely upon his word: and the doing so is very grateful and acceptable to God;[m] for it was that virtue for which Abraham is so highly commended and so richly rewarded: *He did not* (saith St. Paul of him) *stagger at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to per-*

[f] Isa. xlv. 23; liv. 17; Job iv. 9; Num. xiv. 41; Psal. lxvi. 3, 7.

[g] Prov. xi. 21; xvi. 5.

[h] Deut. xxxii. 39; Job x. 7; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Psal. xxxiii. 16; cxlvi. 3; Isa. xxxvi. 6.

[i] Prov. iii. 34; Isa. ii. 11; xiii. 11; xxiv. 21; x. 2; Job xl. 11, 12; xxxviii. 15; Psal. xviii. 27; Isa. xxiii. 9; 1 Pet. v. 6.

[j] 1 Sam. xv. 29.

[k] Num. xxiii. 19; Isa. xiv. 27; xlvi. 10, 11; lv. 11.

[l] Psal. xxxiii. 11, 8; Isa. xl. 8; Mark xiii. 31.

[m] Job xxiii. 13; Prov. xix. 21; Jer. iv. 28.

form:[n] to do otherwise is very displeasing and offensive to God; for we do thereby either doubt of his veracity, so, as St. John saith, *making him a liar;*[o] or we disbelieve his power, and make him impotent in our conceit; which to do is high injury to God, and detestable sacrilege. Hence also,

7. Particularly this consideration may produce and cherish our faith in the sufficiency of God's providence, and may induce us entirely to rely upon it. For if God be omnipotent, then is he easily able to supply us in all our needs, to relieve us in all our straits, to protect us from all danger and mischief; and being able, he will not fail to do it, since his goodness alsodisposeth him thereto, and his word engageth him; he having declared himself to be the patron, protector, and benefactor of the needy; he having promised to help, relieve, and comfort those who seek and cry unto him.[p] Distrust is God's providence is always grounded either in the disbelief of God's goodness or of his power; either in supposing him to be unwilling or unable to do us good; and that is commonly grounded on the latter, the Israelites' constant behaviour in the wilderness (representing the ordinary conversation of men in this world) doth inform us; who conceived their needs greater, than that God was able to supply them; their enemies stronger, than that by God's assistance they could withstand or subdue them; the obstacles to their proceedings such, that God himself could not carry them through them; for, as the Psalmist representeth their behaviour and discourse, *They spake against God, saying, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?*[q] and that from their conceiting God unable to convey them through all dangers and difficulties, to render them victorious over the tall men and the fenced cities of Canaan, they, notwithstanding God's presence with them, and ready aid, desponded in heart, and murmured, and provoked God, and in consequence of such misbehaviour forfeited obtaining the rest propounded to them, many passages in the story do show us.[r] We in practice do commonly follow them, notwithstanding the many experiments of God's wonderful power and goodness, frequently suspecting that God cannot supply our necessities or satisfy our desires; whence we are either overborne with anxiety, and become disconsolate, or have recourse for succour and relief to other aids; deserting God, as the prophet intimates, when he (withal declaring the offence God taketh at such miscarriages, with the guilt and mischief we thereby incur) pronounceth thus: *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord; for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh,*[s] &c. Whence our Saviour took it ill of his disciples, and rebuked them, when even in the most imminent and affrighting dangers they gave place to fear or doubt; as when in a great tempest, *the ship being even covered with waves, they being afraid cried out, Lord save us, we perish;* he said unto them, *Τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?*[t] And when St. Peter, walking upon waves, and beginning to sink, his heart misgiving, in like manner cried out, *Lord save me;* our Lord also reproves him with an *Ὀλιγόπιστε, τί ἐδίστασας; O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?*[u] Whence we both learn that it is our want or weakness of faith which makes us in our greatest needs ready to sink, and that it is not excusable for us in the extremity of danger to doubt of God's protection and succour. Further,

8. This consideration affordeth comfort and encouragement unto us in the undertaking and prosecution of honest and prudent enterprises, giving us to hope confidently for success, how difficult or dangerous soever it appear unto us; all difficulties and improbabilities vanishing before that Omnipotency which abetteth and backeth such endeavours; the which is by faith imparted and appropriated unto us; so that we, with St. Paul, *are able to do all things by God strengthening us.*[v]

[n] Rom. iv. 20, 21. [o] 1 John v. 10.
[p] Psal. cxlv. cxlvi. cxlvii. &c.
[q] Psal. lxxviii. 19, 20.
[r] Deut. i. 28; Num. xiv. 9; Heb. iii. 18.
[s] Jer. xvii. 5, 6. [t] Matt. viii. 24, 25, 26.
[u] Matt. xiv. 39, 31. [v] Phil. iv. 13.

Nothing is so high or difficult (if just and reasonable) which a resolute faith in the Divine power cannot easily surmount and achieve: a word, seconded therewith, can transplant trees, and transfer mountains any whither: *If ye* (saith our Lord) *have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed: Ye may say to this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the roots, and be thou planted in the sea, and it shall obey you; καὶ οὐδὲν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν, and there is nothing* (adds our Saviour) *which shall be impossible unto you;*[w] for, as he saith again, *All things are possible to him that believeth;*[x] that is, unto him who relieth upon the Divine power; for that the faith he speaks of referreth thither, appeareth by several like passages in the gospel; as for instance in that, where to the blind men imploring his relief, our Lord puts this question: *Do ye believe that I can do this?* and they answered, *Yes, Lord;* he thereupon replies, *According to your faith be it done unto you.*[y] In contemplation of this power, we may, if our duty or good reason do call us forth, how small or weak soever in ourselves, how destitute soever of defensive arms or offensive weapons, naked and unarmed, *with a sling and a stone*, go out against the biggest and best-armed Philistine, nothing doubtful of victory; it will be enough, if we can say with David, *I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hosts;*[z] that is, confiding in his powerful help, as my invincible weapon and defence. But so much for this particular.

III. That notion of the word *Almighty*, which implieth God's being universal proprietary and possessor of all things, hath likewise many good uses: we shall only name them, without enlarging upon them. We thence learn,

1. That we ourselves are not our own, and therefore ought to submit ourselves with content and patience to God's disposal; for that, as it is in the gospel, God may *do what he pleaseth with his own.* Whence also we are bound, as St. Paul enjoineth us, *to glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are God's.*[a]

2. That also, therefore, we ought to be content with that portion of accommodations here which God alloweth us; for that since every thing is his, we can claim nothing to ourselves; all we have doth proceed from his mere liberality and bounty.

3. The same reason obligeth us to be satisfied whenever Providence withdraweth what it did afford us the enjoyment of; for God doth never so communicate any thing, as to divest himself of the paramount title and propriety therein; all things have an immutable relation to him as Lord, and cannot be alienated from him;[b] whence he may justly, when he pleaseth, recall or resume them into his hand.

4. Yea, hence we are obliged to be heartily thankful for all we ever have or enjoy; for that nothing is upon any account ours, or can be due to us from him; all proceeding from pure kindness and goodness.

5. We are hence obliged carefully to manage and employ all which is put into our hands for his interest and service; as honest tenants and faithful stewards, making just returns and improvements; not embezzling nor abusing any of his goods committed to us.

6. Lastly, we may learn hence to be humble and sober; not to be conceited or elevated in mind, or apt to glory in regard to any thing we have; since we have nothing that we can justly esteem or properly call our own.

IV. That sense, according to which the word doth signify God's containing all things by his immense presence, is also of most excellent use and influence upon our practice. We thereby may learn with what care and circumspection, with what reverence and modesty, with what innocence and integrity, we ought always, and in all places, to manage our conversation and behaviour; since we continually do think, and speak, and act in the immediate presence and under the inspection of God; whose *eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings;* who *searcheth and trieth our*

[w] Matt. xvii. 20; Luke x. 19; xvii. 6; Mark xi. 23.
[x] Mark ix. 23.
[y] Matt. ix. 28.
[z] 1 Sam xvii. 45.
[a] Matt. xx. 15; 1 Cor. vi. 20.
[b] Job i. 21.

hearts, and *possesseth our reins;* who *encompasseth our path*, and *is acquainted with all our ways;* to whose *eyes all things are naked and dissected;*[c] according to the significant and emphatical expressions of scripture. Did we stand in the sight of our king, we should not dare to behave ourselves rudely and indecently; were a virtuous person conscious of our doings, we should be ashamed to do any base or filthy thing; the oversight of a grave or a wise person would restrain us from practising vanities and impertinences: how much more should the glorious majesty of the most wise and holy God, being ever present to all our thoughs, words, and actions, if duly considered and reflected upon, keep us within awe and compass! how can we, if we remember that we abide always in a temple sanctified by God's presence, not contain ourselves in a careful and devout posture of soul!*

This consideration also prompteth us to frequent addresses of prayer, thanksgiving, and all kind of adoration toward God: for all reason dictateth it to be unseemly to be in his presence with our back turned unto him, without demonstrations of regard and reverence to him, without answering him when he speaketh to us; that is, without corresponding to the invitations which he frequently by his providence maketh to us, of conversing with him, of seeking his favour, and imploring his help, and returning thanks for his mercies.

V. Lastly, the consideration that God doth uphold all things, and consequently ourselves, in being, may upon several good accounts be influential upon our practice; particularly it may powerfully deter us from offending and displeasing him; for put case our life, our livelihood, all the conveniences and comforts of our being, should wholly depend upon the bounty and pleasure of any person, should we not be very wary and fearful to affront, or injure, or displease such a person? It is in the highest degree so with us in respect to God; and why are we so inconsiderate, that the same reason hath not the same effect upon us?

This consideration also should mind us how infinitely we are obliged to the goodness of God, who when he may by the bare withdrawing his conversative influence utterly destroy us, and suffer us to fall to nothing, doth, notwithstanding our many provocations, the many neglects and injuries he receiveth from us, continually preserve us in his hand, and every moment imparteth a new being to us. For which, and all his infinite mercies and favours toward us, let us for ever yield unto him all thanks and praise. *Amen.*

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

SERMON XII.

ACTS iv. 24.—*O Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.*

IT may be demanded, why, besides that of *Almighty*, no other attribute of God is expressed in our Creed? why, for instance, the perfections of *infinite wisdom* and *goodness* are therein omitted? I answer,

1. That all such perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profess to believe, we consequently do ascribe them to him (implicitly.) For he that should profess to believe in God, not acknowledging those perfections, would be inconsistent and contradictious to himself: *Deum negaret* (as Tertullian speaks), *auferendo quod Dei est;*[a] He would deny God by withdrawing what belongs to God.

2. The title παντοκράτωρ, as implying God's universal providence in the preservation and government of the world, doth also involve or infer all Divine perfections displayed therein; all that glorious majesty and excellency, for which he is with highest respect to be honoured and worshipped by us, which, added to the name of God, doth determine what God

* Πᾶς οὐκ καὶ τόπος ἱερὸς τῷ ὄντι, ἐν ᾧ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν Θεοῦ λαμβάνομεν, καὶ χρόνος.—Clem. Alex. p. 520, *vid.* p. 517.

[c] Job xxxiv. 21; Psal. cxxxix. 3, 13, &c.; Jer. xvii. 10; Heb iv. 13; Psal. xc. 8; Prov. xx. 27.

[a] Adv. Marc. cap. 3.

we mean, such as doth in all perfection excel, and with it doth govern the world.

3. I may add, thirdly, That the doctrine of God's universal providence being not altogether so evident to natural light as those attributes discovered in the making of the world (more having doubted thereof, and disputed against it with much more plausibility), it was therefore convenient to add it, as a matter of faith clearly and fully (as we did show) attested unto by Divine revelation. So much may suffice to remove such a scruple concerning the fulness and sufficiency of the Creed in that particular. I proceed;

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

This clause is one of those which was of later times inserted into the Creed; none of the most ancient expositors thereof (Austin, Ruffin, Maximus Taurinensis, Chrysologus, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But Irenæus, Tertullian, and other most ancient writers, in their rules of faith, exhibit their sense thereof, and the Confessions of all general councils (the Nicene, and those after it) express it. And there is great reason for it; not only thereby to disavow and decry those prodigious errors of Marcion, Manichæus, and other such heretics, which did then ascribe the creation of the world (or of some part thereof, seeming to their fancy less good and perfect) to another *God*, or *principle*, inferior in worth and goodness to that God which was revealed in the gospel; or did opinionate two Principles (not distinct only, but contrary one to the other;) from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things were derived: but for that the creation of the world (which the holy confessors of Christ do here in the text ascribe unto God) is that peculiarly august and admirable work, by which we learn that he is, and in good measure what he is; by which, I say, the existence of God is most strongly demonstrated, and in which his Divine perfections are most conspicuously displayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and consequently the chief ground of all natural religion; of our just subjection, our reasonable duty, our humble devotions, toward him: the title, *Creator of heaven and earth*, is that also, which most especially characterizes and distinguishes the God whom we believe and adore, from all false and fictitious deities; for, as the Psalmist sings, *All the gods of the nations are but idols, but the Lord made the heavens;*[b] and, *Thou* (prayeth Hezekiah) *art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth:*[c] and, *The gods* (saith the prophet Jeremiah) *that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens:*[d] and, *We preach unto you* (saith St. Paul to the ignorant Lycaonians) *that ye should turn from those vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth.*[e] It is therefore a point, which worthily hath been inserted into all creeds, and confessions of our faith, as a necessary object of our belief; and it is indeed a subject no less wholesome and fruitful than high and noble; deserving that we employ our best thoughts and most careful attention upon it: to the commemoration thereof God consecreated the great sabbatical festivity among his ancient people; nor should even the consideration of the great work concerning our redemption abolish the remembrance of it: to confer some advantage thereto, we shall now so discourse thereon, as first, to propound some observation explicative thereof, and conducing to our information about it; then to apply the consideration thereof to practice.

We may first observe, that the ancient Hebrews, having, as it seems, in their language no one word properly signifying the world, or universal frame and complex of things created (that system, as the author *de Mundo* defines it, *consisting of heaven and earth, and the natures contained in them*), did for to express it use a collection of its chief parts (chief absolutely in themselves, or such in respect to us), *the heaven* and *the earth*, adding sometimes, because of the word *earth* its ambiguity, the *sea* also:* yea sometimes, for fuller explication, subjoining to *heaven* its *host*, to *earth* its *fulness*, to the *sea* its *contents*. So, *In six days*

[b] Psal. xcvi. 5. [c] 2 Kings xix. 15, 19.
[d] Jer. x. 11. * Acts xiv. 15; xvii. 24.
* Σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ γῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν τούτοις περιεχομένων φύσεων.—De M. 2, Lips. Phys. St. ii. 7.

the Lord made heaven and earth, saith Moses: and, *Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord* (in Jeremiah:) and, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, then for one tittle of the law to fail*, saith our Saviour: and, *God* (saith St. Paul) *who made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth;*[f] (where the *world and all things therein do* signify the same with *heaven and earth;* he first uses the word (*world*) which the Greek language afforded, then adds the circumlocution, whereby the Hebrews did express it.[g]) By heaven and earth therefore we are, I say, to understand those two regions, superior and inferior, into which the whole system of things is divided, together with all the beings that do reside in them, or do belong unto them, or are comprehended by them; as we see fully expressed in our text, and otherwhere; particularly with utmost distinction by the angel in the Apocalypse: who swears *by him that liveth for ever, who created the heaven, and the things that are therein, and the earth, with the things that therein are, and the sea, with the things therein.*[h]

By *heaven*, then, is understood all the superior region encompassing the globe of earth, and from it on all sides extended to a distance unconceivably vast and spacious, with all its parts, and furniture, and inhabitants; not only such things in it as are visible and material, but also those which are immaterial and invisible; so we are plainly taught by St. Paul: *By him* (saith he) *were created all things, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both those that are visible, and those that are invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him:*[i] that is, not only the material and sensible parts or contents of heaven (those bright and beautiful lamps exposed to our view, with the fluid matter, in which they may be conceived to float or swim), but those beings of a more pure and refined substance, and thence indiscernible to our sense, however eminent in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity, whose ordinary residence and *proper habitation*[j] (their ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, as St. Jude termeth it) is in those superior regions; in that they are courtiers and domestic officers of God (whose throne, and special presence, or the place where he more peculiarly and amply discovereth himself, and displayeth his glory, is in heaven), attending upon him, and ministering to him:[k] *encircling his throne* (as it is in the Revelation), and *always* (as our Saviour telleth us) *beholding his face;*[l] even these all were made by God: the time indeed when, and the manner how, those invisible sublime creatures were made, is not in the history of the creation or otherwhere manifestly expressed (because perhaps it doth exceed the capacity, or doth not suit the condition of man to understand them; or because it doth not much concern us, or not much conduceth to our edification, to know them:) but that they were made by God, and that when we call God the *Maker of heaven*, they are comprehended, as the creatures of God, dwelling there, is evidently declared in scripture;* for beside the fore-mentioned clear and full place of St. Paul, the angel forecited in the Revelation saith, that God *created the heaven*, καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, *and the things in it;*[m] and in our text it is said that God *made heaven and all things in it* (πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ), which plainly includeth the angels:[n] if all things in it, then surely the angels, who are often expressed to be in heaven, being indeed the principal and most considerable things therein. And, *Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host,*[o] (pray the Levites in Nehemiah), where, according to the Jews' notion, who say there are three heavens; *Cœlum nubiferum*, or the firmament; *Cœlum astriferum*, the (star-

[f] Gen. i. 1; Jer. xxiii. 24; Luke xvi. 17; Acts xvii. 24.

[g] Psal. lxix. 34; Neh. ix. 6; Exod xx. 11; 2 Kings xix. 15; Isa. xlii. 5.

[h] Rev. x. 6.

[i] Col. i. 16.

* The Greek Fathers commonly (and St. Hierome after them) conceived they were made before the creation of this material world: St. Austin thinks them meant under *Fiat lux.*—*De Civ. Dei*, xi. 9.

Διὰ τὸ τοῖς εἰσαγομένοις ἔτι καὶ νηπίοις κατὰ τὴν γνῶσιν ἀνεπιτήδειον.—Bas. Hex. 1.

Φῶτα δεύτερα τοῦ πρώτου φωτὸς ἀπαυγάσματα.—Naz. Orat. 43.

[j] Jude 6.

[k] Heb. i. 14; Dan. vii. 10; Psal. ciii. 21.

[l] Rev. v. 11; Matt. xviii. 10.

[m] Rev. x. 6.

[n] Mark xii. 25; xiii. 32, &c.

[o] Neh. ix. 6.

ry) heavens; *Cœlum angeliferum*, or the heaven of heavens; where the angels reside (the third heaven in St. Paul;[p]) by the hosts of heaven, are meant the angels; as also the hosts of God do seem to signify in the 103d Psalm, where it is said, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word; Bless ye the Lord, all his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.*[q] Whence they are termed *the sons of God;* as where in Job it is said, *There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord;* and in several other places:[r] and St. Jude telleth us of the lapsed angels, that they did not retain τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν, *their beginning*, or primitive state:[s] wherefore they had a beginning; and whence could they have that, but from God? who alone is eternal (*who alone* originally, intrinsically, and necessarily, *hath*, as St. Paul saith, *immortality;* and consequently alone (as Aristotle by several arguments proveth against Plato hath eternity.[t]) The angels also are subject to God's jurisdiction and governance, which argueth their proceeding from him, and dependence upon him: in fine, the Psalmist reckons them among the works of God; for having said, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels;* and, *Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts;* he recapitulating and concluding subjoins, *Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion:*[u] and again, in the 148th Psalm, summoning all the creation to a concert of doxology, he begins with the heavens, then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts and inhabitants belonging to each; and in the first place mentioning the angels, the stars, then the heaven of heavens, he subjoineth the reason why they ought all to praise God: *Let them* (saith he) *praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created; he hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree, which shall not pass.* Thus we are by Divine revelation instructed concerning the existence and original of those heavenly invisible beings, to the knowledge of whom, that they are, what they are, whence they are, natural light could not reach; although from the relics of primitive tradition even the pagans themselves commonly in part did acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferior or secondary gods, whom they conceived to converse together happily (ἐν τῷ ἀνωτάτῳ τόπῳ) in the highest place above, as Aristotle saith,[v] in subjection to God, and attendance on him, the children of the Supreme God: Plato calls God, Πατέρα καὶ Δημιουργόν, the *Father and Framer*[w] of them all, according (as he avoweth himself) to ancient tradition. And thus concerning those beings piety doth oblige us to believe and profess that God is their Maker, it especially conducing to his glory to believe that he is the Author of their sublime natures, and Donor of those excellent properties with which they are endowed, and wherein they so far surpass all other beings.

As for all other things both in heaven and earth, the material frame of the visible world, with all its parts compacted together in so fair, so fit, so firm and stable an order, they (as we have sometime sufficiently discoursed) even to natural understanding speak themselves to have been produced by a most wise, most powerful, most beneficent author, that is, by God; the which is confirmed by innumerable testimonies of holy writ, so evident and obvious, that we need not to cite them: and to thus much the generality of mankind hath always consented; as also the most and best reputed philosophers did in general terms avow it, acknowledging God the Author and Builder of the world.

But there is one particular, wherein they seem unanimously to have dissented from what Christian piety inclines us to acknowledge as most suitable to the divine perfection and majesty; which concerns the origin of that *matter*, of which corporeal things do subsist. For even Plato himself, who so positively doth assert the world to have been framed by God, is yet conceived (I speak so dubiously, because his writings about this point are somewhat obscure, and, as Jus-

[p] 2 Cor. xii. 2.
[q] Psal. ciii. 20, 21.
[r] Job ii. 1; xxxviii. 7; Psal. lxxxix. 6; xxix. 1.
[s] Jude 6.
[t] 1 Tim. vi. 16; Arist. de Cœlo, i. cap. ult.
[u] Psal. ciii. 20, &c.
[v] Arist. de Cœlo, i. p. 3; Polit. i. 1.
[w] Plato in Tim.

tin Martyr proves, inconsistent with themselves (to suppose the matter of things to be eternal ;[x] he ascribing only to God the forming and disposing it into a good order, answerable to some patterns pre-existent in his wise understanding ; even as a good artist doth out of an unshapen lump of stuff frame a handsome piece of work, conformable to some *idea* (or image) preconceived in his fancy : so that he represents God rather as a builder out of prepared materials, than as a Creator of the world.* *Socrates and Plato* (saith Plutarch) *did suppose three principles of things, God, matter, idea: God is the mind ; Matter the first subject of generation and corruption ; Idea an incorporeal subsistence in the conceptions of God.*[y] Anaxagoras also, as the same author (and Aristotle before him) telleth us, did assert two principles ;† the one *passive*, the *matter*, consisting of an infinite number of small particles like to one another in shape ; the other *active*, *understanding*, which ranged those troops of little bodies into order : to the same effects Pythagoras his conceits, though expressed with much obscurity, are reduced. Thales his opinion was in effect the same, who, as Cicero telleth us, *said, that water was the principle of things, and God that mind which fashioned all things out of water.*‡ The Stoics also were of the same opinion : *It seems to them* (saith Laertius in Zeno's Life) *that there are two principles of all things, the agent and the patient ; that the patient is the matter void of qualities, but the agent, reason which is therein, that is, God.*‖ Tertullian against Hermogenes saith, that *he did take from the Stoics to place matter with God ; which matter did always exist, being neither born nor made, and nowise having either beginning or end, out of which afterward the Lord made all things :** and, *Come now* (saith the same Father in his book against the Valentinians, *let the Pythagoreans learn, let the Stoics acknowledge, and even Plato himself, whence matter, which they would have unmade, did draw its both origin and substance toward all this structure of the world.*† Yea, Aristotle tells us, that generally all natural philosophers before him did conceive, and did assume it for a principle, that nothing was made out of nothing, or that every thing produced had necessarily some pre-existent matter, out of which it was produced : *It is* (saith he) *the common opinion of naturalists, that nothing can be made out of nothing ;* and, *That it is impossible that any thing should proceed from nothing, all that have studied about nature do consent :*‡ which principle Aristotle himself not only admits, but extends further, affirming it impossible that any thing should be produced out of matter not predisposed to admit the form which is to be produced ; οὐδὲ γίνεται ὅτι οὖν ἐξ ὅτου οὖν, *Neither can* (saith he) *every thing be made of every thing, but out of some subject fitted thereto* (or susceptive thereof), *as animals, and plants out of their seed.*‖[a] Which principles, deduced from the observing natural effects, or works of art,

* Ut igitur faber, cum quid ædificaturus est, non ipse facit materiam, sed ea utitur, quæ sit parata, fictorque item cera ; sic isti providentiæ divinæ materiam præsto esse oportuit, non quam ipse faceret, sed quam haberet paratam. —*Cic. apud Lact.* ii. page 180.

Quibus oculis intueri potuit vester Plato fabricam illam tanti operis ; qua construi a Deo, atque ædificari mundum facit?—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* &c.

† Ἀναξαγόρας τε γὰρ μηχανῇ χρῆται τῷ νῷ πρὸς κοσμοποιΐαν.—Arist. Met. i. 4.

‡ Thales aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem esse mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret.—*De N. D.* 1.

‖ Δοκεῖ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀρχὰς εἶναι τῶν ὅλων δύο· τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον· τὸ μὲν οὖν πάσχον εἶναι τὴν ἄποιον ὕλην τὸ δὲ ποιοῦν τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ Λόγον τὸν Θεόν. —Lært. in Zen.—Lips. in Phys. Sen. Ep. 65.

[x] Tim. p. 1058 ; Just. Mart. Cohort. 1, ad Græc. p. 8.

[y] Plut. de Placitis, i. 3.

* Sumpsit a Stoiois materiam cum Domino ponere, quæ et ipsa semper fuerit, neque nata, neque facta, nec initium habens omnino, nec finem, ex quo Dominus omnia postea fecerit.—*Tertul. in Hermog.* 1.

† Age nunc, discant Pythagorici, agnoscant Stoici, Plato ipse, unde materia quam innatam volunt et originem et substantiam traxerit in omnem hanc struem mundi.—*Adv. Valent.* 15. —*Vide* Athenag. Leg. p. 19.

‡ Κοινὴ δόξα τῶν φυσικῶν οὐδὲν γίγνεσθαι ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος—Τὸ γιγνόμενον ἐκ τῶν μὴ ὄντων γίγνεσθαι ἀδύνατον, περὶ γὰρ ταύτης ὁμογνωμονοῦσι τῆς δίξης πάντες οἱ περὶ φύσεως.—Phys. i. 4, 8.

Vide de Gener. et Corrup. i. 3 ; et Metaph. i. 1, 3.

‖ Ἀεὶ ἐστί τι ὁ ὑπόκειται, ἐξ οὗ γίγνεται τὸ γιγνόμενον, οἷον τὰ φυτὰ, καὶ τὰ ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος.—Phys. i. 8.

Erit. aliquid quod aut ex nihilo oriatur, aut in nihilum subito occidat ; quis hoc physicus dixit unquam ?—*Cic. de Divin.* 2.

[a] Phys. i. 9.

performed always by alterations, additions, subtractions, or transpositions of some matter subjacent, we may safely, in respect only to such kinds of effects, proceeding in the ordinary course of nature, admit; allowing no natural agent, no created artificer, sufficient to produce any thing without some matter or subject aptly qualified and prepared to receive its influence; but from hence to conclude universally, that every action possible doth require a matter pre-existent, or a predisposed subject, is nowise reasonable; because such a thing doth not usually according to the course of nature happen; because there is no cause obvious that can perform so much; because we are not acquainted with the manner of way of doing such a thing, that therefore the thing is in itself absolutely impossible, is no warrantable argumentation: no logic will allow us from particular experiments to establish general conclusions, especially such as do concern the determination of what is absolutely impossible; that must be fetched from abstracted notions of reason, not from singular appearances to sense: there may be, for all that we (we pitifully shortsighted creatures in this our dark state) can by any means know, agents of another sort, and powers in manner of efficacy much differing from all those which come within the narrow compass of our observation. Especially, to imagine that the Supreme Being, who made the world in a manner, whatever that manner were, incomprehensible, cannot himself act otherwise than we see these inferior things (not only infinitely lower in degree, but wholly different in nature) do act, is grossly vain and unreasonable: *It is impossible* (saith St. Chrysostom well) *for man's nature by curious inquiry to penetrate the workmanship of God.** From sense or experience, then, such conclusions cannot well be derived; it assures us that some effects are possible, but cannot help us to determine what is impossible. Neither are there any certain principles of reason, from whence it may be collected that it is impossible that some substances should be totally produced *de novo*, or receive completely an existence, which they had not before: that no such principles are innate to our minds (if indeed there be at all any innate principles, which some philosophers deny), every man's experience can tell him: neither do these philosophers allege any such; nor (as we before showed) can any such be drawn from experience. If they say the proposition is αὐτόπιστος, or evidently credible of itself, without any proof, it is a precarious and groundless assertion; such as ought not to be admitted in any science, or any disceptation; except they can show that the terms of these propositions (or of the like equivalent ones), A substance is producible altogether *de novo;* A substance may exist, which did not exist; Something may be produced out of nothing, do involve a contradiction; which it rather is evident they do not, there being nothing contained in the notion of substance inconsistent with such a producibility, or with novity of existence, no more than there is in the notion of figure or of motion, which things no man hardly denies to receive a new existence. In fine, nothing is more reasonable than to confess, that our reason can nowise reach the extent of all powers and all possibilities; and that we much, as St. Chrysostom speaks, do transgress our measures and bounds, if we pretend to know what things God is able to produce, or how he doth produce any:* *His works* (as Lactantius speaketh) *are seen with eyes; but how he made them, the mind itself cannot see.*†, Those opinions, therefore, of the ancient philosophers, that the matter of the world (or of natural things) was eternal and necessarily pre-existent, and that there could be no creation out of nothing, were assumed altogether without any clear or sure foundation. We may say unto them, as our Lord did once say to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. The poverty* and narrowness *of man's natural understanding* (not going usually beyond matters obvious to sense), *and their inability, by the meanness of their reason, to look*

* Ἀδύνατον τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δημιουργίαν περιεργάζεσθαι.—Chrys. in Gen. λογ β'.

* Ὑπερβαίνειν οἰκεῖον μέτρον.—Chrys.

† —— hoc est, modum conditionis suæ transgredi, nec intelligere quousque homini liceat accedere.—*Lact.*——Opera ipsius videntur oculis, quomodo autem illa fecerit, ne mente quidem videtur.—*Lact.* 2.

up to the height of truth, did (as St. Basil says) *deceive them.*[a]* And that these opinions (revived and embraced by divers persons in our days) are false, and contrary to our faith, that in truth all the *matter* of things both could be, and really was, created by God, may from several reasons appear.

1. It is often in general terms affirmed in scripture, that God did make all things; all things in heaven and earth. Now it is unsafe, and never without urgent reason allowable, to make limitations or restrictions of universal propositions, especially of such as are frequently and constantly thus set down: and, like as St. Paul somewhere discourses, because it is said in the prophets, *Every one that believeth in him shall not be ashamed;* and, *Whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved;*[b] therefore both Jews and Greeks, in case of their belief and invocation of God, are capable of acceptance and salvation; *οὐ γάρ ἐστι διαστολή*, for that there is no distinction or exception made: so it being said universally and unlimitedly, that all things were made, and no reason appearing which compels to restrain that universality, therefore the matter of things was also made; the matter being one thing, yea in the opinion of most philosophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only substantial thing in nature; all other things being only modes, affections, or relations thereof. Whence Aristotle telleth us, that most of the first philosophers did affirm nothing at all really to be made, and nothing ever to be destroyed;[c] because matter did always subsist and abide the same, as if no other thing beside in nature had any being considerable. If God, therefore, did not produce matter itself, he could hardly be accounted author of any thing in nature, so far would he be from being truly affirmed the maker of all things: upon this ground Cicero, as Lactantius cites him, denied that God was the author of any of the elements: *It is not probable* (said he) *that the matter, whence all things did arise, was made by divine Providence;* and, *If matter was not made by God, then neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire, were made by him;** to invert which discourse, we say, that God did make all these things (earth, sea, fire, and air), as the holy scripture frequently asserts, wherefore the matter of them was also his work: he was not only, as St. Basil speaks, *an inventor of figures* (or a raiser of motions), *but the maker of nature itself;*† and of all that is substantial therein.

2. Again, God is in scripture affirmed to be the true proprietary and possessor of all things, none excepted: how so, if he did not make them? for *he that did not make, cannot* (as Justin Martyr argues) *have any right to that which is not made.*‡ It is the argument by which the scripture frequently proves God to be the owner and disposer of things, because he made them: *The earth* (saith the Psalmist) *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: for he hath founded it upon the seas and prepared it upon the floods.*[d] So, because (we may say) he did produce matter, and doth sustain its being; therefore he, by the most excellent sort, and upon the best ground of right, doth own it, and may justly use it at his pleasure; otherwise might we not say with Tertullian, *If God did not make matter, he using a thing not his own, because not made by him, either he used it precariously, as needing it, or injuriously, as usurping upon it by force.*‖

3. The supposing any thing to be eternal, uncreated, and independent upon God, doth advance that being in those respects unto an equality with God, imparting thereto so great and divine attri-

* Ἐξηπάτησεν αὐτοὺς τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἡ πενία—οὐ δυνηθέντες διὰ λογισμῶν ταπεινότητα πρὸς τὸ ὕψος ἀπιδεῖν τῆς ἀληθείας.—Bas. Hexaem. Hom. β'.

[a] Matt. xxii. 29. [b] Rom. x. 11, &c.

[c] Arist. Phys. i. 8; Metaph. i. 3.

* Primum igitur non est probabile eam materiam rerum unde orta sunt omnia, esse divina Providentia effectam, sed habere et habuisse vim et naturam suam:—Quod si non est a Deo materia facta, ne terra quidem, et aqua, et aer, et ignis a Deo factus est.—*Cic. apud Lactant.* ii. p. 150

† Ὁ Θεὸς —— οὐχὶ σχημάτων ἐστὶν εὑρετής. ἀλλ' αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως τῶν ὄντων δημιουργός.—Bas. Hex. β'.

‡ Τῷ γὰρ μὴ κτοιήσαντι οὐδεμία ἐξουσία πρὸς τὸ μὴ γεγονός.—Just. M. Cohort. ad Gr. i. p. 22.

‖ —— de alieno usus aut precario usus est, qua egens ejus, aut injuria, qua prævalens ejus.—*Tert. adv. Hermog.* 9.

[d] Psal. xxiv. 1; Gen. xiv. 19; Deut. x. 14.

butes: *It will become* (as St. Basil saith) *God's peer, or equal in dignity, being dignified with the same privileges.** That supposition likewise in effect depriveth God of those special perfections, independency and all-sufficiency; making him in his operations and performances to depend upon, and to be in a manner subject unto, matter; to need its concourse, and to be unable to perform any thing further than it admits: for, *None* (as Tertullian discourseth) *is free from needing that, whose stock he useth; none is exempt from subjection to that, which he needs that he may use; and none who lends of his own to use, is not in this superior to him to whom he lends it for use.*† The very doubting about this made Seneca put such absurd and impious questions as these: *How God's power is limited? whether he effects whatever he pleaseth, or is disappointed by want of matter? whether he doth not form many things ill, not from defect of art in himself, but from disobedience of the subject-matter?*‡ Which questions we easily resolve by saying, nothing is impossible to God; his will can never be crossed or disappointed; he can never do any thing bad, or imperfect in its kind; because he createth matter itself answerable to his design.

4. As Aristotle well discoursed against the ancient philosophers, who, before Anaxagoras, did assign but one principle of things, a material and passive one, as if no active principle were required; so may we argue against him and them together. If God did produce and insert an active principle into nature (as who can imagine those admirable works of nature, the seminal propagation and nutrition of plants, and however more especially the generation, motion, sense, fancy, appetite, passion of animals, to be accomplished by a mere passive agitation of matter, without some active principle distinct from matter, which disposeth and determineth it to the production of such effects? if God could, I say, produce and insert such an active principle (such an ἐντελέχεια, as the philosopher calleth it), why might he not as well produce a passive one, such as the matter is? what greater difficulty could he find in doing it?

5. Yea further, if God hath produced immaterial beings, or simple and uncompounded substances distinct from matter, such as angels and the souls of men, merely out of nothing (for out of what pre-existent stuff could they be made?) then may he as well create matter out of nothing; for what greater difficulty can we conceive in creating so much lower and more imperfect a thing, than in creating those more excellent substances, so much fuller, as it were, of entity, or so far more removed from nothing? If any one thing is producible out of nothing, why may not all things capable of existence be so produced by a competent and omnipotent virtue? *Why not* (as Tertullian argued) *all things out of nothing, if any thing out of nothing; except if the divine virtue, which drew somewhat out of nothing, was insufficient to produce all things thence?** But that such immaterial substances were produced by God, we before, from many plain testimonies of Divine revelation, did show: and particularly the souls of men are produced from God's breath, or by the efficacy of his word.

6. The manner of God's making the world, expressed in scripture, by mere will and command (*He spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast; he commanded, and they were created,*[e]) that only by uttering the word *fiat* (not audibly, but mentally, that is, by an act of volition), all things should be formed and constituted in their specifical natures and perfections, doth argue, that matter, or any other thing possible, might easily by the divine power be produced out of

* Ὁμότιμος ἔσται Θεῷ τῶν αὐτῶν πρεσβείων ἀξιουμένη.

† Nemo non eget eo, de cujus utitur; nemo non subjicitur ei, cujus eget ut possit uti; et nemo qui præstat de suo uti, non in hoc superior est eo, cui præstat uti.—*Tert. adv. Herm.* iv. 5.

‡ Quantum Deus possit; materiam ipse sibi formet; an data utatur; utrum idea materiæ prius superveniat, an materia ideæ; Deus quicquid vult efficiat, an in multis rebus illum tractanda destituant; et a magno artifice prave formentur multa, non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo exercetur sæpe inobsequens arti est. —*Sen. Præf. Nat. Qu.*

* Cur non omnia ex nihilo, si aliquid ex nihilo; nisi si insufficiens fuit divina virtus omnibus producendis, quæ aliquid protulerit ex nihilo?—*Tertull. adv. Herm.* 15.

[e] Psal. xxxiii. 9; cxlviii. 5.

nothing. Likewise effecting miracles superior or contrary to the law and course of nature, without any preparatory dispositions induced into the suscipient matter, in the same manner, by mere willing, saying, or commanding, whereof there be in the scripture frequent instances, doth persuade the same: *θέλω καθαρίσθητι, I will; be thou cleansed: Woman, great is thy faith, γενηθήτω σοι, ὡς θέλεις· be it to thee, as thou desirest: Νεανίσκε, σοὶ λέγω, ἐγέρθητι, Young man, I say to thee, Wake*, from the sleep of death:[f] so did our Saviour speak, and the effect immediately followed; whereby, as he demonstrated his divine power, so he declared the manner whereby divine power doth incomprehensibly operate in the production of things; and that it therein nowise dependeth upon matter: for it is nowise harder or more impossible to produce matter itself, than to produce a form therein without or against an aptitude to receive it: nay, it seemeth more difficult *to raise children unto Abraham out of stones*,[g] than to draw them out of nothing; there, being a positive obstacle to be removed; here, no apparent resistance: there, as well somewhat preceding to be destroyed, as somewhat new to be produced; here, only somewhat simply to be produced: especially considering, as we said, that God useth no other means, instruments, or applications, in these productions, than his bare word or command; which there is no reason why we should not conceive as able immediately to make the matter, as to produce the forms of things.

7. Lastly, The holy text, describing the manner and order of the creation, doth insinuate this truth. *The scripture* (saith Tertullian well) *doth first pronounce the earth to be made, then setteth out its quality; as likewise first professing the heaven made, it in the sequel doth superinduce its disposition.** *In the beginning* (saith Moses) *God made heaven and earth: now the earth was without form;* that is, it seems, God at first did make the matter of heaven and earth devoid of all form and order, a confused and unshapen mass; then he digested and distinguished the parts of them, by several steps, orderly raising thence all those various kinds, and well arrayed hosts of goodly creatures: first he made the stones and timber, and all requisite materials, then did he rear and frame this stately fabric. So the words do sound, and may well be understood.

From these premises we may conclude against those philosophers, who, destitute of the light of revelation, did conceit otherwise, and against those Christians who have followed the philosophers (as Hermogenes of old, and Volkelius of late, together with the sectators of their opinions), that God did create (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word, did create), that is, either immediately or mediately did produce out of nothing, or did bestow entirely a new existence unto every thing which is, not excepting any one; and that is the sense of the words, having *made heaven and earth;* or of the title, *Maker of heaven and earth*, ascribed unto God.

Which title, as all sober Christians have always acknowledged, and the holy oracles do most plainly avouch, due to the one true God alone (for, *to us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things*,[h]) so there were divers heretics of old, Marcion and others of the Gnostic crew, who contradicted it; affirming, that the God of the Old Testament, who made the world and enacted the ancient law, whom Moses and the Prophets did declare, was not the same God with him from whom the gospel proceeded, and who is preached therein; the Mosaic God being a worse conditioned God, fierce and rigid, angry and implacable, delighting in wars and mischiefs; but the evangelical God, the Father of our Lord, being mild and gentle; void of all wrath and spleen; very indulgent and beneficent.* Of kin to that

* Scriptura terram primo factam edicit, dehinc qualitatem ipsius edisserit; sicut et cœlum primo factum professa, dehinc dispositionem ejus superinducit.—*Tertull. contra Hermog.* 26.

Τὴν ὕλην προυποστήσας εἰδοποίησεν ἑστερον, ἐκόσμησε τάξιν καὶ σχῆμα, καὶ μέγεθος περιθείς.—Gr. Naz. Or. 43.

[f] Luke v. 13; Matt. xv. 28; Luke vii. 14.

[g] Matt. iii. 9.

* Prædicat hic duos esse Patres, divisaque regna:
Esse mali causam Dominum qui condidit orbem;
Quique figuravit carnem spiramine vivam;
Quique dedit legem, et vatum qui voce locutus;
Hunc negat esse bonum, justum tamen esse fatetur,

[h] 1 Cor. viii. 6.

fancy of Marcion was the error of the Manichees, who supposed two first causes of things; from one whereof good, from the other evil, did fatally proceed; which conceit, it seems, they drew from the Persian, Egyptian, or other Ethnical doctrines; the which we have recited by Plutarch in his discourse about Isis and Osiris: *The Persian magi* (said he) *had their Oromazes and Arimanius; the Egyptians, their Osiris and Typhon; the Chaldeans, their good and bad planets; the Greeks, their Zeus and Hades; the Pythagoreans, their Monas and Dyas; Empedocles, his Concord and Discord*,* &c. The like report we have in divers other writers: the common reason, or ground, upon which these erroneous conceits were built, was this: there appearing to be in nature some things imperfect, and some things bad (as ill dispositions, inclinations, and passions of mind; ill tempers and diseases of body, attended with pains and troubles in life; vices, discords, deformities, antipathies, irregularities, monsters, poisons, and the like things dispersed in nature), this sort of things they supposed could not proceed from perfect goodness, the fountain of what was good, lovely, orderly, convenient, pleasant, and desirable: *If* (discourseth Plutarch, expressing the main of their argument) *nothing can naturally arise without a cause, and good cannot afford causalty to evil, it is necessary that nature should have a proper seed and principle of evil as well as good: and thus it seems to the most and wisest; for they indeed conceive two gods as it were counterplotting each other; one the contriver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better one God; the other, Dæmon.*† But this discourse hath two faulty suppositions: it supposeth some things be imperfect and evil, which are not truly such; and to those things, which are truly such, it assigneth an imaginary and wrong cause.

1. It supposeth some beings according to their original nature and constitution to be evil and imperfect; which supposition is, I say, false; for there is no sort of creature which did not at first pass the Divine approbation: *God saw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good*:[1] good, that is, convenient and suitable to its design (or its Author's idea), fair and decent in its place, according to its proportion; very good, that is, perfect and complete in its degree, without any defect, blemish, or flaw; not liable to any reasonable blame or exception. There are indeed among the creatures some degrees of perfection (it was fit there should be so in great variety, that things might by comparison illustrate and commend one another; that there might be regular subordinations and subserviencies, and harmonies; that several faculties of intelligent creatures might be exercised, and improved, and delighted; that the πολυποίκιλος σοφία, *the manifold*, or multiform, *wisdom* of the Creator might be displayed, acknowledged, and celebrated; there are, I say, for such purposes in nature, creatures gradually different in excellency), whence some things may be said comparatively imperfect, or rather less excellent and noble in respect to other things endued with higher faculties, or (as they be sometimes called) perfections of nature;* some things are less active and more passive than others; are not so capable of enjoyments delectable unto, and more subject to impressions distasteful to, their particular nature; which passivities and displeasures are not simply evils, because they do suit the degree of the particular natures of those subjects, being also ever overbalanced with other pleasing activities and enjoyments: so have things different measures of excellency; but nothing, as it comes from God's hand, or stands in its rank in nature, is positively imperfect, or void of that perfection which is due to its kind; much less is

Crudelem, durum, belli cui sæva voluptas,
Judicio horrendum, precibus mansuescere nullis:
Esse alium suadens, nulli qui cognitus unquam;
Hunc ait esse bonum, nullum qui judicat æque,
Sed spargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli.
Adv. Marc. Poem. 1.

* Plut. de Iside et Osiride; Aug. de Civ. Dei, xx. 5, cum Lud. Vive; Laertius in proœmio; Plato de Leg. x.; Eusebius de Præp. 24; Arist. Metaph. iv. 1; Simplic. in Epict.

‡ Εἰ γὰρ οὐθὲν ἀναιτίως πέφυκε γενέσθαι, ἀρχίαν δὲ κακοῦ τ' ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἂν παράσχοι, δεῖ γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν ὥσπερ ἀγαθοῦ, καὶ κακοῦ τὴν φύσιν, &c.—Plut. de Is. et Osir.

* Naturæ omnes quoniam sunt, et ideo habent modum suum, speciem suam et quandam secum pacem suam, profecto bonæ sunt.—*Aug. de Civ. Dei.* xii.

[1] Gen. i. 31.

any creature absolutely bad, that is, ugly, or noxious, or troublesome, or cumbersome to the universe; so that it were better away out of it, than in it. *God* (saith the Hebrew Wise Man) *created all things that they might have their being, and the generations of the world were healthful, and there is no poison of destruction in them.* Every thing contributes somewhat to the use and benefit, or to the beauty and ornament of the whole: no weed grows out of the earth, no insect creeps upon the ground, which hath not its elegancy, and yields not its profit; nothing is abominable or despicable, though all things are not alike amiable and admirable: there is, therefore, nothing in all the compass of nature unfit or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which he beseemingly, without derogation to his excellencies, may not own for his work; nothing which in its rank and degree doth not confer to the manifestation of his glorious power, admirable wisdom, and excellent goodness: *O Lord* (cried the devout Psalmist upon particular survey and consideration of them), *how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.*] That which we call poison, is such only relatively, being noxious or destructive to one part, but innocent, wholesome, and useful to some other part; and never prejudicial to the whole body of things: yea, even to that part itself it is commonly beneficial in some case or season; affording, if not continual alimony, yet sometime physic thereto, and serving to expel another poison or mischief more imminently dangerous. That which we call a monster, is not unnatural in regard to the whole contexture of causes, but ariseth no less methodically, than any thing most ordinary; and it also hath its good end and use, well serving to illustrate the beauty and convenience of nature's usual course.* As for pain and grief incident to the natures of things, without regard to any demerit or justice, they are not properly evils, but adherences to the less perfect natures of things; in a state liable to which God not only justly, but wisely, according to his pleasure, might constitute things, for the reasons and ends before insinuated; for no reason obliged him to confer upon every thing extreme perfection; he might dispense his liberalities in what kind and measure he thought good.* In fine, the reason of offence we take at any thing of this kind, seeming bad or ugly to us, ariseth from our defect of knowledge and sagacity, we not being able to discern the particular tendency of each thing to the common utility and benefit of the world.†

2. But as for those real imperfections and evils, truly so called (*which* alone, as St. Basil speaketh, *are properly evil, and most worthy of the appellation of evils*,‡) habitual distempers of soul, and irregular actions; errors, and vices, and sins; we need not search for any one eternal or primitive cause of them: although order, uniformity, beauty, and perfection do, yet disorder, confusion, deformity, and defect do not, argue any unity of cause, whence they should spring; the true causes of them are sufficiently notorious; not the will or power of a Creator, but the wilfulness and impotency of creatures are the fountains of them.§ They are no substantial beings, and so do not need an infinite power to create them; they do hardly need a positive cause; being themselves rather defects, than effects: privations of being, than positive beings: *Let no man* (saith St. Austin) *seek an efficient cause of a bad will; for there is no efficient, but a deficient thereof: for that itself is not an effection, but a defection*:|| and, *An evil will* (saith he again) *is the efficient cause of an ill work; an evil will hath no*

* Ἔστι τὸ τέρας τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τι· παρὰ φύσιν δ' οὐ πᾶσαν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολύ· παρὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀεὶ, καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὐδὲν γίνεται παρὰ φύσιν.—Arist. de Gen. Animal. 4.

] Psal. civ. 24.

* Τῆς τοῦ ὅλου δημιουργίας, ὥσπερ τινὲς ἐπόμεναι καὶ ἀναγκαῖαι φύσεις.—Max. Tyr. 25.

† Divina nos admonet providentia non res insipienter vituperare, sed utilitatem rerum diligenter inquirere, et ubi nostrum ingenium vel infirmitas deficit, ibi credere occulta, &c.; atque hæc ipsa aut humilitatis exercitatio est, aut elationis attritio.—*Aug. de Civ. Dei*, ii. 22.

‡ Τὰ κυρίως κακὰ, ἅπερ μάλιστά εἰσι τῆς τῶν κακῶν προσηγορίας ἄξια.—Bas. in Orat. Quod Deus non est author mali.

§ Peccatum a Deo non est, quia nec est.—*Lips.*

|| Nemo quærat efficientem causam malæ voluntatis, non enim est efficiens, sed deficiens; quia nec illa effectio est, sed defectio.

*cause;** that is, none beside itself, or its own deficiency. And again; *Evil hath no nature, but the loss of good hath received the name of evil:*† however, most certainly, *the rise and root of sin is our free will and choice;*‡ it is κακὸν βλάστημα προαιρέσεως (as Cyril Hier. saith), *a bad sprout from our choice.* Men, or other intellectual and free agents, their voluntarily averting themselves from the supreme true good to inferior appearing goods; their wilfully declining from the way which God doth show and prescribe to them; their rejecting the advices, and disobeying the laws of God; their thwarting the dictates of that reason which God did put in them; their abusing their natural faculties; their perverting and corrupting themselves, and others also, by ill example, persuasion, allurement, violence; these causes of such evils are most visible and palpable:[k] we need not go far, nor rise to the top of things, to find an author, upon whom we may charge our evils; they are most truly called our *ways*, our *works*, our *imaginations*, our *inventions*, and *devices;* they are the children of our affected stupidity and our naughty sloth; of our precipitant choice, of our stubborn will, of our unbridled passion;|| they are wholly imputed to us; we are blamed, we are condemned, we are punished for them: as it is horrible blasphemy to ascribe them to the most good God; so it is vain to imagine any other necessary principle, any uncreated mischievous Arimanius, any spiteful Cacodæmon, any eternal Fate, to father them upon.§

The mischiefs, also, of pain and grief consequent upon those distempers and misdemeanours (*that unwilling brood of wilful evils,*¶ as Damascene calls them), have very discernible originals: they are partly to be imputed to us, and partly attributed to God: we by our faults deserve and draw them to ourselves; God in justice and wisdom doth inflict them on us: *Perditio tua ex te; O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself:* and, *Wo unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves:*[l] so doth God charge the cause of such evils upon us; and, *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the Most High; I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil:*[m] so God assumes the causality of them to himself. We need, therefore, not to inquire after any other cause of these evils (*mala pœnæ*), so called because they are displeasing to sense or fancy; although, considering the needfulness and usefulness of them in respect to public benefit (as they are exemplary and monitive), and their wholesomeness for particular correction and cure (for, *No chastening*, as the apostle saith, *for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby,*[n]) in such respects they may rather be called good things; however, as they have any thing bad in them, they proceed from us; as they contain somewhat good, they are from God: which sufficiently confuteth those heretical opinators, and decideth the controversy; it being vain to suppose any other, beside these most apparent causes of such evils; our bad desert, and God's just providence. It is considerable, that even vice (although the worst thing in the world, and bad to the subject thereof) is yet in some respects useful; it in regard to the whole is not unprofitable; it serveth to the illustration of God's holy attributes; it is a foil to virtue, and setteth off its lustre. But let thus much suffice concerning the objects of the creation.*

* Mala voluntas efficiens est operis mali, malæ autem voluntatis efficiens est nihil.—*Aug. de Civ. Dei,* xii. 6, 7.

† Mali nulla natura est, sed amissio boni mali nomen accepit.—*Aug. de Civ. Dei,* xi. 9.

‡ Ἀρχὴ καὶ ῥίζα τῆς ἁμαρτίας τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ αὐτεξούσιον.—Bas. ubi supr.

|| Τὴν μοχθηρίαν ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξουσία κνίσκει τε καὶ τελεσφορεῖ.—Max. Tyr. xxv.

§ Αἰτία ἑλομένου· θεὸς ἀναίτιος. Plato de Rep. x. Οὐ γὰρ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, μὰ Δία, οὐκ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.—Max. Tyr.

¶ Ἑκουσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια ἔκγονα.—Damasc. de Orth. F. iv. 20.

[k] Deut. iv. 16; xxxi. 29; Gen. vi. 11; Exod. xxxii. 7, &c.

* Γίνεται καὶ ἡ κακία πως κατὰ τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον, καὶ οὐκ ἀχρήστως πρὸς τὰ ὅλα.—Chrys. apud Plut. de Stoic. contr. 31, 32; Sen. Qu. Nat. præf. et de Benef. 21; et Epist. 65.

[l] Hos. xiii. 9; Isa. iii. 9.

[m] Amos iii. 6; Lam. iii. 38; Isa. xlv. 7; Tertull. in Marc. 2.

[n] Heb. xii. 11.

I shall next touch a consideration or two concerning the manner how, and the reason why, God did make the world; which will commend to us his doing it, and intimate some grounds of duty, and both direct and excite our practice in respect thereto.* The manner of God's producing the world was altogether voluntary, and absolutely free; it did not issue from him ἀπροαιρέτως, without counsel or choice, not (as some philosophers have conceited) by natural or necessary emanation or result; as heat from fire, or light from the sun, or shadow from a body; but from a wise, free choice: he so made the world, that he could wholly have abstained from making it, that he could have framed it otherwise, according to an infinite variety of ways.† He could not be fatally determined, there being no superior cause to guide him, or to constrain him anywise (to do, or not to do; to do thus or otherwise;) he could not be obliged to impart any perfection, being absolute master of all things possible, and debtor unto none upon any account:‡ it is his privilege, therefore, and property, to perform all things κατὰ βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, *according to the counsel of his will*,° or according to his wise pleasure, as St. Paul expresseth it; and accordingly we hear the elders in the Revelation acknowledging, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, καὶ διὰ τὸ θελημά σου, and for thy will they are and were created:*[p] they do affirm God's pleasure, to be the cause of his creating things, and they imply its being so to be the ground of our due veneration, gratitude, and all devotion; these being tributes due unto free goodness and bounty: if he made all things fatally, no praise or thanks were due to him; if he doeth things so, there is no reason to offer prayers to him, to seek his aid, or implore his favour; no devotion toward him hath a ground or can subsist. It is also evident, that if the world had been produced in way of necessary emanation, that it should have been eternal; as, if the sun had been eternal, his light had been eternal also; if fire had been, its heat likewise had been from eternity: but that the world was produced in time, not long since, within six or seven thousand years, not only faith and divine chronology do assure us; but reason also shows, and all history conspires to persuade us; there being no plain monument, or probable memory of actions, beyond that time: and by what progressions mankind was propagated over the world; how, and when, and where, nations were planted, empires raised, cities built, arts invented or improved, it is not very hard to trace near the original times and places. The world, therefore, in respect of time conceivable by us, is very young, and not many successions of ages, or lives of men, have passed between its beginning and ours; whence it plainly appears, that it was freely produced by God.

And how he produced it, the scripture further teacheth us. It was not with any laborious care or toil; not with the help of any engines or instruments subservient; not by inducing any preparatory dispositions or aptitudes, but ψιλῷ τῷ βούλεσθαι, by his mere willing, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks; his will and word were, as Tertullian expounds it, the hands by which it is said that God made the heavens; at his call they did all immediately spring up out of nothing; at his command they presently ranged themselves into order: it was not a high strain of rhetoric in Moses, as Loginus deemed,[q] thus to describe the creation, but a most proper expression of that incomprehensible efficacy, which attends the Divine will and decree.

But since God did not only make the world freely, but wisely; and since all wise agents act to some purpose, and aim at some end, why (may it be inquired) did God make the world? what impulsive reason or inducement was there moving his will to do it? We may answer with Plato, ἀγαθὸς ἦν, *He was good; and he that is good doth not envy any good to*

* Fecit quam optimum potuit, ait Plato in Tim.

† Αἴτιον μὲν αὐτοῦ ὁμολογοῦσι τὸν Θεὸν, αἴτιον δὲ ἀπροαιρέτως, ὡς τῆς σκιᾶς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τῆς λαμπηδόνος τὸ ἀπαυγάζον.—Bas. Hexaem. α'.

Οἷονεὶ ἀποσκίασμα τῆς δυνάμεως.—Id.

‡ Δοῦλοι βασιλέων εἰδὶν, οἱ βασιλεῖς θεῶν, θεοὶ δ' ἀνάγκης.—Philemon.

° Eph. i. 11. [p] Rev. iv. 11.

[q] Long. sect. 7.

*anything:** his natural benignity and munificence was the pure motive that incited or invited him to this great action of communicating existence, and suitable perfection to his creatures, respectively:† no benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him; he could receive no accession of beatitude; he did not need any profit or pleasure from without, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himself. *Can a man*, can any creature, *be profitable to God?* No; *our goodness doth not extend to him;*[r] we cannot anywise advance or amplify him thereby; it is because goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of itself; because love is active and fruitful in beneficence; because highest excellency is void of all envy, selfishness, and tenacity, that the world was produced such as it was; those perfections being intrinsical to God's nature (for *God is love*, that is, essentially loving and good), disposed him to bestow so much of being, beauty, delight, and comfort to his creatures.[s] Hence, *The earth* (saith the Psalmist) *is full of the goodness of the Lord;*[t] that is, every thing therein, according to its state and degree is an effect of the Divine goodness, partakes thereof both in its being and in its enjoyments; and, *The Lord* (saith he again), *is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or his bowels of affection) *are over all his works:*[u] he is good and tenderly kind toward all his works, as well in producing them as preserving them; in freely rendering them capable of receiving good, as in carefully providing, and liberally dispensing good unto them: *That thou givest them* (saith the Psalmist, speaking with respect to the universality of things) *they gather; thou openest thine hand, they are all filled with good:*[v] it is from God's open hand (that is, from his unconfined bounty and liberality) that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them; which satisfieth their needs, and satiateth their desires: a glimpse of which truth the ancient pagans seem to have had, when they, as Aristotle observed, did commonly suppose Love to have been the first and chief of the Gods; the original source and framer of things.*[w] But I will no longer insist on this point in way of doctrine or disquisition: I shall only adjoin a little application.

1. The belief and consideration of this point (that God is the Maker of heaven and earth) must necessarily beget in us highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God, and his divine excellencies, his power, wisdom, and goodness: for what a power must that be (how unconceivably great, both intensively and extensively, must it be!) which could so expeditely and easily rear such a stupendously vast frame! vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection that we can make! the earth, on which we dwell, divided into so many great empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion, as a little sand hath to the earth itself, or a drop of water to the great ocean! What a wisdom must that be, how unconceivably large and penetrant, that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures (the artifice which appears in one, in the least of which, doth so far transcend our conceit) could digest them so fitly, could connect them so firmly in such an order! What a goodness and benignity must it be (how immense and boundless!) that did extend itself in affection and care, for so many creatures, abundantly providing for the need and comfort of them all! how transcendently glorious is the majesty of him, that was Author of all those beauties and strengths, those splendours and magnificences, we do with so much pleasure and so much wonder behold! Well might the devout Psalmist and divine prophet hence frequently take occasion

* Quæris quid propositum sit Deo? Bonitas; ita certe Plato ait: Quæ Deo faciendi mundum causa fuit? Bonus est; bono nulla cujusquam boni invidia est.—*Sen. Ep.* 65.

† Ἐποίησεν ἀγγέλους, ἀρχαγγέλους, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας τῶν ἀσωμάτων οὐσίας· ἐποίησεν δὲ δι' ἕτερον μὲν οὐδὲν, δι' ἀγαθότητα δὲ μόνην, &c.—Chrys. t. vi. Or. 9, ad Stagir.

[r] Job. xxii. 2; Psal. xvi. 2.

[s] 1 John iv. 8, 16.

[t] Psal. xxxiii. 5; cxix. 64.

[u] Psal. cxlv. 9.

[v] Psal. civ. 28.

* Πρώτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μηθίσατο πάντων.—Parmenides.

Ἠδ' Ἔρος, ὃς πάντεσσι μεταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισιν.—Hesiod.

[w] Arist. Metaph. i. 4.

of exciting us to praise and celebrate the perfections of God: well might even heathen philosophers, from contemplation of the world, be raised into fits of composing hymns and elogies of its great Maker.

2. This consideration likewise may confer to the breeding of hearty gratitude and humble affection toward God; for that we are upon many accounts very nearly and highly concerned in this great production. We ourselves, whatever we are, and all we have, and all we enjoy; all our intrinsical endowments, and all our extrinsical accommodations, are parts thereof, and did proceed from God; yea, all the whole frame was designed by him with a particular regard, and from an especial good-will unto us; was fitted for our enjoyment and use: the world was made as a convenient house for us to dwell in, as a pleasant theatre for us to view, as a profitable school for our instruction, as a holy temple for us to perform offices of no less sweet than reasonable devotion;* for our benefit those huge orbs roll incessantly, diffusing their glorious light, and dispensing their kindly influences; for our sake the earth is decked with all that goodly furniture, and stored with all that abundance of comfortable provisions: all these things out of pure benevolence, not being moved with any desert of ours, not regarding any profit of his own, before any desire or any thought of ours (before we were capable of wishing or thinking) God was pleased to contrive, and to accomplish for us. *We* (said a philosopher) *regard and esteem ourselves overmuch, if we think ourselves worthy, that so great matters should be agitated for our sake:*† and the Psalmist signifies the same, when, upon contemplation of the world, he saith, *When I consider the heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?*[x] That the Author of so great and glorious a work should vouchsafe to regard so mean things as us, to visit us continually with a provident inspection and care over our welfare, to lay so vast projects, and accomplish so mighty works in regard to us: what a demonstration of admirable condescension, what a ground of wonder and astonishment, what an argument of love and thankfulness toward God is this!

3. Yea, what a ground and motive to humility should this consideration be unto us! What is man? what, I say, is man, in comparison to him that made the world? what is our strength, what our wit, what our goodness, what any quality or ability of ours, in respect to the perfection of those things in him? how weak, silly, narrow, poor, and wretched things, must we needs appear to ourselves, when seriously we consider the immense excellencies displayed in the world's creation! how should this depress and debase us in our own conceits about ourselves! especially if we reflect upon our own unprofitableness, our ingratitude, and our injustice toward our Creator; how none, or how scant, returns we have made to him, who gave unto us, and to all things for us, our being and theirs, our all and theirs; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our services, we have been; yea, how preposterously, instead of our due homage and tribute, we have repaid him affronts and injuries, frequently opposing his will and abusing his goodness!

4. This consideration is further a proper inducement unto trust and hope in God; and withal a fit ground of consolation to us in all our needs and distresses. He that was able to do so great things, and hath been willing to do so much for us; he that having made all things, can dispose of all, and *doeth* (as king Nebuchadnezzar, taught by experience, confessed) *according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*[y] how can we distrust his protection or

* Mundus quasi communis Deorum atque hominum domus, aut urbs utrorumque.—*Cic. de N. D.* ii.; *de Fin.* iv.

Mundus Deorum templum.—*Sen. de Ben.* vii. 7; *Epist.* 90; *Cic. in Som. Scip. Philo. de Mun.* 2, &c.

Ψυχῶν παιδευτήριον, καὶ διδασκαλεῖον, &c.—Bas. M.

——οὐ πόνων ἀμοιβὴν ἔδωκεν, οὐ δὲ κατορθωμάτων ἀντίδοσιν, &c.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ζ'.

Cogitavit nos ante natura quam genuit, &c. —*Sen. de Benef.* ii. 23.

† Nimis nos suspicimus, si digni nobis videmur, propter quos tanta moveantur.—*Sen. de Ira*, 27.

[x] Psal. viii.

[y] Dan. iv. 35.

succour in our exigencies? This consideration good men have been wont to apply to such purposes: *My help* (saith the Psalmist) *cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth:*[z] well might he be assured, having so potent and faithful an aid; and, *Happy* (saith he again) *is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help: whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth; the sea, and all that therein is:* happy indeed he surely is; no disappointment or disaster can befall him, who doth with reason confide in him that made the world, and can manage it to his advantage. The prophet Jeremiah begins his prayer thus: *O Lord God, behold thou hast made heaven and earth by thy great power and stretched out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee.*[a] The creation of the world is such an experiment of God's power and goodness, as may support our faith in all encounters; so that we should not think any thing so difficult, but that God is able, nor so high, but that God is willing to perform it for us, if it make toward our real good.

5. Finally, This consideration ministereth a general incitement unto all obedience; which from God's production of all things doth appear, upon several accounts, due and reasonable: all other things do constantly obey the law imposed on them, insist in the course defined to them; and shall we only be disobedient and refractory, irregular and exorbitant? shall all the hosts of heaven most readily and punctually obey God's summons? shall *the pillars of heaven tremble, and be astonished at his reproof?* shall *the sea* with *its proud waves* be curbed and confined by his decree? shall *fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds* (such rude and boisterous things), *fulfil his word?*[b] as they are all said to do; and shall we be unruly and rebellious? we, who are placed in the top of nature, for whom all nature was made, to whom all nature serves; shall we only, of all things in nature, transgress against the Author and Governor of nature?

But I leave the further improvement of this grand point to your meditation, concluding with the exortation of that angel in the Apocalypse: *Fear God, and give glory to him; worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water:*[c] even to him be all obedience, and adoration, and praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

[z] Psal. cxxi. 2; cxxiv. 8; cxlvi. 5.
[a] Jer. xxxii. 17.
[b] Isa. xlviii. 13; xl. 26; Job ix. 5; xxvi. 11; xxxviii. 1; Jer. v. 21; Psal. xlviii. 8.

[c] Rev. xiv. 7.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIII.

OF THE TRUTH AND DIVINITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

EPH. i. 13.—*In whom ye also* (trusted), *having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT our religion in gross is true and agreeable to reason, is a ground upon which the truth of its single doctrines and articles of faith doth lean; it is therefore requisite that it first be well supported, or that we be thoroughly assured thereof. Being therefore engaged at other times to discourse upon the particular points of Christian doctrine, which suppose this general one; I shall take occasion collaterally in these exercises to insist upon this subject; supposing in those, what in these we shall endeavour to prove; so both avoiding there such grand digressions, or the treating upon matters not directly incident; and supplying here what seems necessary or useful there to the confirmation of our faith.

Now in the words I did now read, St. Paul styles the Christian doctrine (and in many other places of scripture it is also so called) *the word of truth* (that is, a most true doctrine), and *the gospel of our salvation*, (that is, a message brought from heaven by our Saviour and his apostles; in which the ways and means of attaining salvation (that is, of that best happiness which we are capaple of), the overtures thereof from God, and the conditions in order thereto required from us, are declared.) And that we have reason to entertain it as such, I shall immediately address myself to show.

It was anciently objected by Celsus and other adversaries of our religion, that Christianity did exact from men ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, *a bare groundless faith;* did impose νόμους ἀναποδείκτους, *laws uncapable of proof* (that is, as to the goodness and reasonableness of them;) did inculcate this rule, Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ μόνον πίστευε, *Do not examine or discuss, but only believe;** that it debarred inquiries and debates about truth, slighted the use and improvement of reason, rejected human learning and wisdom, enjoining men to swallow its dictates without chewing, or any previous examination concerning the reason and truth of them.

The ground of this accusation was surely a great mistake, arising from their not distinguishing that belief whereby we embrace Christianity itself in gross, from that belief whereby in consequence to the former we assent to the particular doctrines thereof: especially to such as concern matters supernatural, or exceeding the reach of our natural understanding to penetrate or comprehend. For as to the first kind, that belief whereby we embrace Christianity itself, as true in the gross; I say, it is nowise required upon such terms; our religion doth not obtrude itself upon men in the dark, it doth not bid men to put out their eyes, or to shut them close; no, nor even to wink, and then to receive it: it rather obliges them to open their eyes wide, to go into the clearest light; with their best senses to view it thoroughly, before they embrace it.† It requires not, yea it refuses, ordinarily, a sudden and precipitate assent; admitting no man (capable of judging and choosing for himself) to the participation thereof, or acknowledging him to be a believer indeed, till (after a competent time and means of instruction) he declares himself to understand it well, and heartily to approve it. Never any religion was so little liable to that censure; none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to consider and weigh its pretences; yea, provoked them, for its sake and their own (at the peril of their souls, and as they tendered their own best good and safety), to an εὐγνώμων ἐξέτασις, an equal and discreet examination thereof. Other religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of ancestors, the prescriptions and customs of times, their large extent and prevalence among multitudes of people, their establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments wholly extrinsical and of small validity), declining all other test or trial of reason:* yea, it is remarkable how Celsus, and others who made the foresaid objection, did contradict and confute themselves, affirming men ought without scruple to conform in opinion and practice to the religion prescribed by the laws of their country, be they what they will, never so absurd or dishonest.† Δεῖ φυλάσσειν τὰ εἰς κοινὸν κεκυρωμένα (things established by common authority must be observed:) and, τὰ παρ' ἑκάστοις ὀρθῶς ἂν πράττοιτο ταύτῃ δρώμενα, ὅπῃ ἐκείνοις φίλον (things are every where rightly done, being done according to the fashion of each place.) Such were the rules and maxims those men urged. And this was indeed exacting irrational belief; a stifling men's reason, and muzzling their judgments; this was a method enforcing men blindly to yield consent to errors and inconsistencies innumerable. But the teachers and maintainers of Christianity proceeded otherwise; confiding in the pure merit of their cause, they warned men to lay aside all prejudices; to use their best understandings; in a case of such moment, to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth: let one for the rest speak their sense: *Oportet in ea re maxime, in qua*

* Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον.—Orig. i. page 8, 9; vi. page 282.—Πίστευσον εἰ σωθῆναι θέλεις ἢ ἄπιθι.

† *Vide* Orig. in Cels. lib. iii. page 142.—Ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας οὐκ ἁπλῶς, οὐδὲ ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ κρίσει καὶ πληροφορίᾳ, χάρισμα εἴληφεν ἐκθεοῦ, &c.—Const. Ap. viii. 1.

* Hæ sunt religiones, &c.—*Lactant*, ii. 6, (p. 171.)

† Quæ omnia sapiens servabit tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam Dîis grata.—*Sen. apud Aug. de Civ. Dei*, vi. 10.——Omnem istam ignobilem Deorum turbam, quam longo ævo longa superstitio congessit sic (inquit) adorabimus, ut meminerimus cultum ejus magis ad morem, quam ad rem pertinere.—*Id.* 16. ——Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat.—*Aug. ib. de Seneca.*

* Orig. v. p. 248, &c.

vitæ ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque judicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam et perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ipsum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione sapientiam, ut et inaudita investigare possent, et audita perpendere:[b] *We ought especially* (says he) *every one of us in that matter which chiefly concerns our manner of life, to confide in ourselves; and rather with our own judgment and our proper senses strive to find out and judge of the truth, than believing other men's errors, to be deceived like things void of reason: God hath given all men a competent share of wisdom, that they might both search out things not told them, and weigh what they hear.* So especially just and candid was Christianity in its first offering itself to the minds of men. It propounds, indeed, and presses, as evident in itself, the worth and consequence of the matter; but refers the decision on either part (so far as concerns every particular man) to the verdict of that reason and conscience with which to such purposes God hath endued every man. And that it can proceed no otherwise appears further from the nature of that faith it requires: it commends faith as a great virtue, and therefore supposes it both voluntary and reasonable; it promises ample rewards thereto, and so implies it a work not of necessity or chance, but of care and industry;* it declares infidelity to be very blameable, and threatens severe punishment thereto: why? because it signifies irrational negligence or perverseness.

In fine, Christianity doth not inveigle any man by sleight, nor compel him by force (being indeed commonly destitute of those advantages; nor being able to use them, if it would), but fairly by reason persuades him to embrace it; it doth not therefore shun examination, nor disclaim the judgment of reason; but earnestly seeks and procures the one, cheerfully and confidently appeals to the other: *Examine all things; hold fast that which is good. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God. See that no man deceive you. Be always ready with meekness and respect, to give to every one that demands it of you an account of the hope in you.*[c] These are the maxims which Christianity goes upon in the propagation and maintenance of itself.

Indeed, after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial assent, without exception, to its particular doctrines, grounded upon or deduced from them. When, I say, it hath, to the satisfaction of man's mind, with solid reason made good its principles; it then enjoins men to surcease further scruple or debate concerning what it teaches or draws from them; which is a proceeding most reasonable, and conformable to the method used in the strictest sciences: for the principles of any science being either demonstrated out of some higher science, or evidenced by fit experiments to common sense; and being thence granted and received, it is afterward unlawful and absurd to challenge the conclusions collected from them; so if it have been proved and acknowledged that our principles are true (for instance, that God is perfectly veracious, and that Christian religion hath *his* authority, or attestation to it), it will then be a part of absurd levity and inconsistency to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein; and in this sense or in these cases it is true indeed that Christianity doth engage us to believe simply and purely, doth silence natural reason, and condemn curious inquiry, and prohibit dispute, especially to persons of meaner capacities or improvements. And thus, I take it, those Christians of old were to be understood, who so much commended immediate faith, excluded reason from being too busy in matters of religion, discountenanced that curiosity which searched into, and would needs sound, those inscrutable mysteries which our religion teaches. Our religion, then will allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an infidel to consider and judge of its truth, although it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconstant as to doubt of any particular doc-

[a] Ἕξις προαιρετικὴ μετ' ἀληθοῦς λόγου, ἑκούσιος συγκατάθεσις.—Clem. Alex.

[b] Lact. ii. 7.

[c] 1 Thess. v. 21; 1 John iv. 1; Matt. xxiv. 4; Eph. v. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 15.

trine therein ;[d] seeing, by so questioning a part, he in effect renounces the whole, and subverts the foundation of his faith; at least ceases thereby to be a steady Christian. I might, then, well invert our adversaries' discourse, and offer it as a good argument of our religion its truth, that it alone among all religions, with a candour and confidence peculiar to truth, calls us to the light, is willing, yea desirous, to undergo trial;[e] I add, yea challenges, as its due from all men, and demands it of them as a necessary duty, to hear it, to consider it seriously, to pass sentence upon it; for as commonly error and groundless conceit, being conscious of their own weakness, are timorous and suspicious, and thence ready to decline all proof and conflict of reason; so truth, knowing its own strength, is daring and resolute; enters boldly into the lists, being well assured (or hopeful) of good success in the combat.

Which proceeding, proper to Christianity, is in itself very plausible, and may well beget a favourable prejudice on its side; and that it is not confident without reason, will appear upon our examining the principles and grounds on which it stands. The first principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other religions) is, that there is one God (sovereign and trancendent in all perfections; the Maker and Governor of all things.) The next (which also no religion doth acknowledge) is, that God is perfectly veracious, so that whatever appears to be asserted, or attested to, by him, is certainly true; which principles (by reasons I hope proper and sufficient) I partly have proved, and partly shall hereafter upon occasion show. A third is, that God is the author of the Christian doctrine and law; that he hath revealed this doctrine to mankind, and confirmed it by his testimony; that he hath imposed this law upon us, and established it by his authority. This principle (being the foundation and sum of our faith) involves matter of fact; and consequently, being not evident immediately in itself, doth (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid persuasion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe it like reasonable men, not (as pagans and Mahometans, and those of other sects do*), upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance, as also for settling the ground of particular articles comprehended under this, I shall endeavour to show the reasonableness thereof; advancing my discourse by several steps and degrees. I observe first, that,

1. It is reasonable to suppose that God should at some time or season fully and clearly reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as he and they stand related to each other; concerning his nature and will, concerning our state and duty, respectively: the nature and attributes of God, the nature and qualities of man, being compared, do persuade thus much.

It is apparent to common experience, that mankind being left to itself (especially in matters of this kind) is very insufficient to direct itself; that it is apt to lie under woful ignorance, to wander in uncertainty, to fall into error, to possess itself with vain conceit, to be abused with any sort of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtilty of naughty men, or the wildness of its own fond passions and desires, can put upon it or bring it under; it is consequently exposed to all those vices, dishonourable, hurtful, and destructive to its nature; and to all those miseries, which from ignorance or error, from vice and wickedness, do naturally spring; especially to an estrangement from God, and an incapacity of his love and favour. The two only remedies of all these mischiefs, natural light and primitive tradition, how little they did avail to cure them; how the one was too faint in itself, and easily lost in mists of prejudice from ill education and bad custom, prevailing generally; how the other (besides its other defects) soon was polluted, and indeed quite spoiled, by adulterate mixtures of fond, impure, and vile superstitions, woful experience doth more than enough evince. We see, that not only the generality of mankind did sometime lie in this sad condition, but that even the most elevated and refined wits (those among men who by all possible improvement of

[d] Bas. in Psal. 15.

[e] John iii. 21, 22.

* Μάθωμεν τοίνυν οὕτω πρὸς Ἕλληνας διαλέγεσθαι, ἵνα μὴ ὦμεν ὡς θρέμματα καὶ βοσκήματα, ἀλλ' ὦμεν παρεσκευασμένοι περὶ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ἐλπίδος.—Chrys. in 1 Cor. i. 17.

their reason did endeavour to raise themselves from this low estate; to rescue their minds from the common ignorance, the mistakes, the superstitions and follies of the world) could by no means in any good measure attain those ends; for what did their earnest inquiries or their restless studies produce, but dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager disputations conclude, but in irreconcilable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainties than were when they began? Most were plunged into a desperate scepticism (a doubt and diffidence of all things;) none arrived higher than some faint conjectures on some unsteady opinions concerning those matters of highest consequence; such notions as were not effectual enough to produce in them a practice in any good measure suitable to the dignity of man's nature, to the duty he owes to God, to the capacities man hath of doing and receiving good; from which due glory to God or much benefit to man did accrue. Ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς, *they were made vain*[f] (or, they were frustrated, deluded, befooled) in their reasonings and disputes; the result of their busy speculations was, that *their foolish heart was darkened;* so darkened, that with all the light they had, they could not see any thing; at least not clearly discern what chiefly it concerned them to know: *The world by wisdom* (by all the wisdom it could get) *did not know God;*[g] did not acquire a requisite measure of knowledge in divine things: did not, however, know him so as to glorify him; as to thank him for the benefits received from him; as to bring forth worthy fruits of piety and virtue. So much St. Paul observed of them; and not he alone did observe it, but even themselves were sensible of this their unhappiness;[h] whence so many complaints concerning the blindness and infirmity of man's mind, concerning the obscurity and uncertainty of things, concerning the insuperable difficulty of finding truth, concerning the miserable consequences from these, do occur among them.*

Now this being the natural state of men, destitute of divine conduct and assistance; do they not (I pray) greatly need another light to guide them in this darkness, or to bring them out of it; a helpful hand, to free them from these inconveniences? and is it not reasonable to suppose that God, who is alone able, will also be willing in due time to afford it? He, who in nature is most benign and bountiful, most pitiful and gracious; whose goodness fills the earth, and whose mercy is over all his works;[i] he, who bears to man the special relation of a Father, and bears to him a suitable tenderness of affection and goodwill; he, all whose attributes seem concerned in engaging him upon this performance; not only his goodness to *instigate* him, and his wisdom to *direct* him, but even his justice in some manner to *oblige* him thereto.

1. His *goodness: Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?*[j] Yea, though it is unnatural and unusual, it is yet possible she may, because nature in her is not unalterably constant and the same; but the immutable God cannot so cease to be mindful of, to be compassionate toward, his children. That gracious ear cannot hear mankind groan so dolefully under bitter oppressions; that pitiful eye cannot behold his own dear offspring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless distress, without feeling some pity, without being moved to reach some relief; such notes surely cannot be grateful, such spectacles cannot be pleasant to him, nor can he then forbear long to provide means of removing them from his presence. We esteem it want of goodness (yea an effect of very bad disposition) not to direct a bewildered traveller, not to relieve, if we can, even a stranger fallen into great distress: and if we, being in such degree bad, are inclinable to perform such good offices, how much more ready may we suppose him, who is goodness itself (goodness infinite and absolute), to do the like for all mankind, so much needing his guidance and help! He who hath settled our outward estate in so advantageous a posture, who hath made provisions so various and ample for the needs and con-

* ——Hinc causa mali mortalibus ægris
Naturam nescire Dei.

[f] Rom. i. 21; Eph. iv. 17.
[g] 1 Cor. i. 21. [h] Rom. i. 21, &c. 18.
[i] Psal. xxxiii. 5; civ. 24.
[j] Isa. xlix. 15.

veniences (yea for the pleasure) of our bodies, would he have so little care over our better part, and leave our souls so slenderly furnished, letting them pine, as it were, for want of spiritual sustenance? How can we think his good providence defective in so main, so principal a part thereof?[k] Thus doth divine goodness (to my apprehension) very strongly confirm our supposition.

2. And his *wisdom* enforces the same: God made the world to express his goodness and to display his glory; and his goodness who can be sensible of, his glory who can perceive, who can promote, but man? but he who is endued with reason, enabing him to reflect upon the good he feels, to admire the excellency he discovers, to render grateful acknowledgments for the one, to utter acclamations of praise to the other? which purposes yet will be utterly (or at least in great measure) frustrated, should God for ever suffer men to continue in such ignorance, doubt, or mistake concerning himself; if men are not fully persuaded that he made the world and governs it, how can they pay those due homages of dread to his glorious power, of admiration to his excellent wisdom, of love to his transcendent goodness? This grand theatre would, as it were, stand useless, and all the wonders acted thereupon would appear in vain, should there be wanting a spectator; should man be altogether blind or heedless; yea, man's faculty itself, that his seeing faculty of mind, would signify nothing, were there not a light rendering things visible to him. Common sense hath dictated to men, that man is capable of showing respect, of performing duty and service, to God; that also God requires and expects them from him; the same declares, that God best knows what kinds of service, what expressions of respect, best please him. Reason tells, that God would have man act in the best manner, according to the design of his nature; that he would have the affairs of men proceed in some good order; that he even desires earnestly the good of men, and delights in their happiness: and if so, it is reasonable to suppose, that being most wise he should dispose fit means for accomplishing those ends; for securing himself, as it were, from disappointment; that therefore he should impart to men a competent knowledge of himself, should declare his good-will and pleasure to them, should reveal both the best way of their serving him, and the best means of their attaining happiness to themselves. So divine wisdom grounds an argument for our supposition.

3. God's *justice* also seems not a little to favour it: every good governor thinks it just to take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws; he causes them, therefore, to be solemnly promulgated, that all may take notice; if any of them by long disuse are become unknown, he revives the knowledge to them by new proclamations; to quicken obedience he propounds fit rewards, and deters from disobedience by menancing suitable punishments, knowing man's nature, resty and unapt to move without these spurs: and is it likely the sovereign Governor and Judge of all the world should observe less equity in his administrations? that he should neglect any means necessary or apt to promote his subjects' performance of their duty, to prevent the breaches of his laws? He that loves righteousness above all, he that so earnestly desires to be duly obeyed, he that infinitely delights in his subjects' good; can he fail sufficiently to declare his will, to encourage men to comply with it, to terrify them from transgressing it? will he suffer his laws to remain unknown, or uncertain? will he not consider the infirmities of his subjects? will he leave any fair apology for disobedience? No, the superlative justice of God seems to persuade the contrary.

4. I might add, that generally it seems unbecoming the Majesty Divine, that he should endure the world, his kingdom, to continue under a perpetual usurpation and tyranny; to suffer that his imperial throne should be possessed, his authority abused, his name insulted over, by enemies and rebels against him (by evil spirits, whether those of hell or those on earth;[l]) that a cruel fiend, that a cursed ghost, that a brute beast, that a chimera of man's fancy, should be worshipped, while himself is forgotten and neglected,

[k] *Vide* Ezek. xvi.

[l] Acts x. 38; Eph. ii. 2.

is dishonoured and despised; that iniquity and wickedness (with all the filthy brood of ignorance and error) should every where flourish and domineer, while righteousness and virtue lie prostrate, and are trampled upon: this surely the King of Glory, the great Patron of goodness, will not permit to be; sooner rather may we conceive, that, to remove these indecencies and these mischiefs, he would presently turn the world into a desert and solitude, or pour a deluge of water over the face of the earth, or with flames of vengeance consume it into ashes.

We cannot indeed judge or determine concerning the special circumstances or limits of God's dealing toward man in this particular; concerning the time when, the manner how, the measure according to which, God will dispense those revelations of himself: those depend upon mysteries of counsel and wisdom surpassing our comprehension. That God should for a while connive at men's ignorance, and suffer them to grope after divine truth;[m] to try them, as he did the Israelites in the wilderness, how they would behave themselves in that state;[n] to prove how they would use their talent of natural light, to make them sensible of their own infirmity, to show them whence all their welfare must preceed, on whom all their happiness depends, to make them more able to value, more desirous to embrace, the redress vouchsafed them; as also, to demonstrate his own great clemency, longsuffering and patience; that, I say, for such purposes, and others unsearchable by our shallow understanding, God should for some time forbear with a full evidence to declare all his mind to men, is not so strange or unlikely;[o] but that for ever, through all courses of time, he should leave men in so forlorn a condition, in such a depth of ignorance, such perplexity of doubt, such captivity under sin, such subjection to misery, seems not probable, much less can it seem unprobable that he hath done it: it cannot, I say, in any reason seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom, or justice of God, clearly to discover to us what he requires us to do, what good he intends for us, what way leads to our happiness, how we may avoid misery. This consideration, if it do not prove peremptorily that God cannot but sometime make such a revelation, nor that he yet hath actually done it (forasmuch as we cannot reach the utmost possibilities of things, nor are fit judges of what God must necessarily do; although to my apprehension this sort of reasoning, with due caution used, subsisting in general terms, and not over precisely applying it to particular cases (implicated by circumstances and specialties not falling under our judgment) hath great force;) yet it removes all obstruction to our belief, and disposes us with more readiness to admit the reasons which follow; for it being not unprobable, yea, according to the reason of the thing, very probable, that he should do it, we have cause with attention and expectation of success on this hand to regard the arguments that pretend to prove he hath done it.

This is the first step of our Discourse, at which we shall stop for the present.

[m] Acts xvii. 27, 30; xiv. 16.
[n] Deut. viii. 15, 16; Exod. xvi. 8.
[o] *Vide* Gen. xv. xvi. &c.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIV.

OF THE IMPIETY AND IMPOSTURE OF PAGANISM AND MAHOMETANISM.

EPH. i. 13,—*In whom ye also* (trusted), *having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT the Christian doctrine is what St. Paul here calls it, *a word of truth*, and did proceed from the God of truth, is the proposition we are endeavouring to verify and persuade. To that purpose we did first discourse, that it is very probable God should sometime clearly and fully reveal his mind to men, concerning matters relating to his own glory and service, their good and happiness.

II. I now proceed another step, and assert, that no other revelation of that kind and importance hath been made; that no other religion, which hath been or is now in being, can with good probability pretend to have thus proceeded from God; so as by him to have been

designed for a general, a perpetual, a complete instruction and obligation of mankind. There have appeared but *three* pretences thereto; that of ancient Paganism, that of Mahometanism, and that of Judaism (for the more particular pretentions of enthusiastical impostors have been subordinate either to Christianity itself, or to one of those; and besides having found no considerable progress or continuance in the world, nor countenance, as it were, from Providence, are not pertinent to this consideration, besides that they are all generally disclaimed;) but that none of those three pretences are well grounded, I shall, examining each briefly, show: (briefly, I say, for I need not insist on them largely, the matter having passed so many good pens, especially that excellent one of Grotius; however, it falling in my way and method, I shall offer what hath concerning it occurred to my thoughts.)

For the first, ancient Paganism: It did indeed (in the parcels thereof, or by retail) pretend to a kind of divine revelation; that it derived its notions and its forms of practice from the direction of invisible powers, given to single persons or places, in several ways, (by immediate apparition, by prophetical inspiration, by significant events or prodigies;) but it did not, nor could pretend to any one uniform revelation from the sovereign God, solemnly delivered and directed to all mankind; which is an argument, not only that those pretended revelations were imperfect and insufficient to the ends propounded, but also false and counterfeit: for we may well suspect those edicts which are clancularly set up in corners, and which run not in the king's name, nor are marked with his royal signature, to have proceeded from impostors or from rebels; especially if the matter of them doth not advance, but depress his authority; doth not promote, but prejudice his interest; doth not comport with, but contravene his pleasure, otherwise declared. And such was the manner, such the matter of those pagan revelations. Put the whole body of that religion (if I may so call it) together, and you have nothing but a lump of confusion and inconsistency, of deformity and filthiness, of vanity and folly, little as may be therein tending to the reverence of God, or to the good of man;* to the promoting virtue and goodness in human conversation, to the breeding love and good-will in men toward one another, to the maintaining justice, peace, and good order in societies; much apt to produce the contrary effects. It was not, I say, ever one simple or uniform, one fixed or constant thing, but, according to differences of place and time, various and mutable; diversely shaped and modelled, according to the fancy and humour, design or interest of the state that allowed it, the priests that managed it, and the people that received it; a plain sign, that (excepting some general scattered notions deduced from ancient tradition) it did wholly proceed from human device, or from a worse cause, the suggestion of evil spirits, abusing the fondness and pravity of men. Survey it, and what shall you find therein, but a bundle of idle, ill-contrived, incredible, and inconsistent stories (arguing nothing of truth or sincerity, little of wit or discretion, in those who invented them;) those attended by practices foolish, lewd, and cruel; unworthy of human nature, contrary to common sense and honesty? Their worship (that of the supreme Lord being neglected, &c.) you will see directed towards objects most improper and unbecoming: to the ghosts of dead men; men in their lives (if we may trust the reports of their devoutest adorers) famous for nothing so much as for vicious enormities, for thefts and rapines, for murders and parricides, for horrid lusts, adulteries, rapes, and incests; and such persons, alive or dead, what good or wise man would not rather loathe and despise, than worship or respect? to somewhat, though not otherwise, yet in degree of nature, worse than those, even to brute beasts; to the most vile, the most mischievous of them, (dogs, serpents, crocodiles;) to pay veneration unto which, how unspeakably abject a mind doth it argue! Yea, they stooped lower, even to creatures inanimate, to the stars and elements, to rivers and trees, and other such things, which we see acting by natural necessity, not yielding any

* Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, dum solos credit habendos
Esse Deos, quos ipse colit.——
Juv. Sat. xv.

signification of understanding, of sense, of life, in them; which, therefore, so far inferior to us in nature, how sottish a baseness was it to adore! nay, they descended to a lower degree, if it may be, of folly, dedicating temples and offering sacrifices to things even void of subsistence, to mere qualities and accidents of things, to the passions of our minds, to the diseases of our bodies, to the accidents of our lives. Who would think any man could be so mad as to reckon impudence, that odious vice; a fever, that troublesome disease; or fortune (that unaccountable name of nothing, which wise men so little trust, and fools so much complain of), among things divine and venerable? Can I mention any thing worse than all these, which the degenerate ignorance and naughtiness of man hath crouched to? Yes (with a folly of all most wretched and deplorable), they fawned upon, they obeyed, they offered their dearest pledges of life and fortune to the sworn enemies, as of God and goodness, so of their own good and welfare, to the very cursed fiends of hell: whom, if they had not been extremely blind and senseless, by the quality of those rites and mysteries they suggested (so bloody and cruel, so lewd and foul), they might easily have detected to be so. Such objects as these was their devotion spent upon, to these they paid their respect, in these they reposed their confidence. And was such a religion likely to proceed from God? was it like to produce any glory to him, or any benefit to man? From such thorns, what fruits can we hope should sprout of good life, of sound morality? what piety toward God, what justice, truth, or goodness toward man; what sobriety or purity in themselves, can we expect should arise from such conceits and such practices? Surely no other than those which St. Paul describes in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and in the second of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and St. Peter, 1 Ep. iv. 3, which history plainly shows to have been no slanderous imputations upon Gentilism. If any good did appear in the conversation of some men who followed that religion, it is not to be imputed to the influence of that, but to some better cause; to the relics of good nature; to the glimmerings of natural light breaking forth in some, and by their precept or example conveyed to others; to the necessary experience concerning the mischiefs of vice and advantages of virtue; or perhaps also to secret whispers and impressions of divine grace upon some men's minds, vouchsafed in pity to them, and others whom they might teach or lead into ways somewhat better than those common ones of extreme wickedness and folly: to these, I say, or such causes, all instances of practice in any measure innocent or commendable may rather be ascribed, than to that religion, which was much apter to corrupt and debauch, than to better or civilize men; for with what intention soever they were spoken, there was not much of real calumny in those words of Lucretius,

——————sæpius olim
Religio peperit scelerata, atque improba facta.

But it is needless to discourse much against that which hath no reasonable patron, and which scarce any wise man, when it was in fashion, did seriously think to have had any truth or reality in it. Plato, you know, often inveighs against the inventors of those beastly fables in heathen theology (upon which yet all the economy of their religious practice did depend;) Aristotle attributes the constitution of those religions to the subtilty of statesmen:[a] there is none of the Fathers, I think, or any other disputer against heathenism, who hath more directly or earnestly oppugned it than Pliny hath.[b] There was few, or none, of the philosophers, who did not signify his dislike or contempt of the vulgar opinions and practices concerning religion;[c] what Cicero saith of one part, the wiser sort did judge of all: *Tota res est inventa fallaciis aut ad quæstum, aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem,*[d]* (The whole business was deceitfully forged either for gain, or out of superstition, or from mistake. They did in-

* Hæc et dicuntur et creduntur stultissime, et plena sunt futilitatis, summæque levitatis.—*Balbus in Cic. de N. D.* 2. *Vide* Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. iv. 33; vi. 10.

[a] Arist, Metaph. xii. 8.

[b] Lib. ii. cap. 7.

[c] *Vide* Plut. de Superst. p. 291.

[d] De Leg. x. &c.; De Div. ii. p. 240; Tusc. ix. 1, Ep. 301.

deed, most or all of them, in their external behaviour, comply with common practice, out of a politic discretion, for their safety and quiet's sake: but in their inward thoughts and judgments they (as, by many passages in their writings doth appear) believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it: they observed those things, as Senaca said, *tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam diis grata* (not as acceptable to the Gods themselves, but as commanded by the laws of their country.) And indeed this dissimulation was so notorious, that even the vulgar discerned it; and therefore seldom the wiser men were reputed among them the most religious, but liable to accusation for impiety; and some of them, ye know, suffered extremities upon that score, who could not altogether conceal that contempt, which the vanity of popular superstitions had begotten toward them in their hearts.

I might add, that all those pagan religions did vanish together with the countenance of secular authority and power sustaining them; which shows plainly enough, that they had little or no root in the hearty belief or approbation of those who professed them.

And thus much may suffice, I suppose, to declare, that paganism did not proceed from divine revelation, but from human invention, or suggestion diabolical.

I shall only adjoin, that the considering this case of heathens may be of good use (and to that use indeed St. Paul hath largely applied it) in confirming what we before urged, the great need of some full and plain revelation to the world of God's mind, in order to God's glory and man's good; as also it is of singular use (which also the same apostle frequently did put it to), by the contemplation thereof to discover our great obligations to bless and thank God for his great mercy in revealing his heavenly truth to us, from whence we are freed from errors and mischiefs so deplorable; which otherwise, from human infirmity and the Devil's malice, we should easily (and in a manner necessarily) have incurred.

That pretence was ancienter in standing; but there hath, even since Christianity, started up another (Mahometanism) which, if not upon other accounts, yet in respect to its age, and to the port it bears in the world, demands some consideration; for it hath continued a long time, and hath vastly overspread the earth: neither is it more formidable in its looks, than peremptory in its words; vaunting itself to be no less than a complete, a general, an ultimate, declaration of God's pleasure, cancelling and voiding all others that have gone before. But examining both the substance and circumstances thereof, considering the quality of the instruments by whom, of the times when, it was introduced; of the places where, of the people who first or afterward did receive it; the manner of its rise, progress, and continuance; as also the matter it teaches or enjoins; we shall not find stamped on it the genuine characters of a divine original and authority, but have great reason to deem it a brood of most lewd and impudent cozenage. In times of great disturbance and confusion, when barbarous nations, like torrents, did overflow the world, and turned all things upside down; in times of general corruption and disorder in men's minds and manners, when, even among Christians, ignorance and superstition, dissension and uncharitableness, impiety and iniquity, did greatly prevail; in a very blind and obscure corner of the earth, among a crew of wild thieves and runagates (such have those Arabians been always famed and known to be), this sect had its birth and fosterage; among those fierce and savage overrunners of the world it got its growth and stature; into this sort of people (being indeed in its constitution well accommodated to their humour and genius), it was partly insinuated by juggling tricks, partly driven by seditious violence; the first author hereof being a person, according to the description given of him in their own legends, of no honest or honourable qualities, but having all the marks of an impostor; rebellious and perfidious, inhuman and cruel, lewd and lascivious, of a base education, of a fraudulent and turbulent disposition, of a vicious life, pretending to enthusiasms, and working of wonders; but these such as were both in their nature absurd and incredible, and for their use vain and unprofitable: at such a season and in such a soil, by such means and by such a person (abetted by associates like himself,

whom his arts or their interests had inveigled to join with him), was this religion first planted; and for its propagation it had that great advantage of falling in the way of barbarous people, void of learning and civility, and not prepossessed with other notions or any sense of religion; who thence (as mankind is naturally susceptive of religious impressions) were capable and apt to admit any religion first offering itself, especially one so gross as this was, so agreeable to their furious humours and lusts. Afterward being furnished with such champions, it diffused itself by rage and terror of arms, convincing men's minds only by the sword, and using no other arguments but blows. Upon the same grounds of ignorance and force it still subsists, neither offering for, nor taking against itself, any reason; refusing all examination, and, upon extreme penalties, forbidding any dispute about its truth; being indeed so far (whether out of judgment or fatal instinct) wise, as conscience to itself, or foreboding, that the letting in of a little light, and a moderate liberty of discussing its pretences, would easily overthrow it. Now, that divine wisdom should choose those black and boisterous times to publish his will, is as if the king should purposely order his proclamation to be made in a tempestuous night, when no man scarce dared to stir out, nor any man could well see what was done, or hear what was said: much fitter surely to that purpose were serene and calm day, a time of general civility and peace, like that of Augustus Cæsar. That the declaration of God's mind should issue from the deserts of Arabia (that den of robbers), is as if the king should cause his edicts to be set up in the blindest and dirtiest nook of the suburbs: the market-cross, surely, or the exchange (the place of most general and ordinary concourse), such as, in respect to the world, was the flourishing empire of Rome, were more convenient, and wisely chosen for that purpose. That, passing over the more gentle and tractable part of his people, a prince should send his law to a rabble of banditti; should pick out for his messenger a most dissolute varlet, attended with a crew of desperate ruffians, resolved to buffet and rifle all they met, were an odd way of proceeding: to communicate his pleasure unto the better and more orderly sort of people (such as were the subjects of that well governed empire;) by persons of good meaning, mild disposition, and innocent behaviour (such as were the apostles of our Lord;) in a quiet and gentle manner (such as these only used;) would surely better become a worthy prince. Thus even the exterior circumstances of Mahometanism (both absolutely and in comparison), belonging to its rise, its growth, its continuance (so full of indecency, of iniquity, of inhumanity), ground strong presumptions against its divinity; or rather, plainly demonstrate that it could not proceed from God, whose truth cannot need such instruments or such courses to maintain it, whose goodness certainly abhors them. But further, if we look into the matter and inward frame thereof, we shall find it a mass of absurd opinions, odd stories, and uncouth ceremonies; compounded chiefly of the dregs of Christian heresies, together with some ingredients of Judaism and Paganism confusedly jumbled or unskillfully tempered together. From Christian heresies it seems to have derived its negative doctrines, opposite to Christianity; as for instance, when allowing Christ much respect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and that he did really suffer; rejecting his true story, it affixes false ones upon him: as also some positive ones; for example, that unreasonable opinion, so much misbeseeming God, that God hath a body (Mahomet, forsooth, once touched his hand, and felt it very cold), might be drawn from the Anthromorphites; that Doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events (so prejudicial to all religion, subverting the foundations of justice between God and man, man's free choice in serving God, God's free disposal of rewards suitable to men's actions), they probably borrowed from the Manichees, a sect that much obtained in those eastern parts. The Jew contributed his ceremonies of circumcision and frequent purgations by washing, his abstinence from swine's flesh, his allowance of polygamy and divorce: I might add, that perhaps from him they filched that proud, inhuman, and uncivil humour of monopolizing divine favour and goodwill to themselves; so of restraining their own kindness and respect to persons of

their profession, or sect; condemning, despising, and hating all the world beside themselves; calling all others dogs, and adjudging all to certain damnation; and, which is more, affirming that all of their belief, how wicked soever their lives have been, shall at length assuredly partake of salvation: so partial do they make Almighty God, so addicted to a mere name and outward show, feigning him, as in shape so in passions, human and like themselves. Indeed in this main part of religion, a true notion of God, his nature, his attributes, his method of providence, their doctrine is very peccant, representing him, in his nature and actions, very unworthily. Their descriptions concerning the state of men after death (that main and principal part of religion which gives life and vigour to the rest) whence can we better deduce its original, than from the pagan notions or stories of Elysium and Hades? what better pattern can we find, whence that paradise of corporeal delight, or rather of brutish sensuality, should be transcribed, which any man sees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward to virtue; yea, how much it is apt to detract from, to discourage all performances of reason and honesty? The like we might say of the punishments (which in due correspondence to the rewards they propound) they only or chiefly inflict upon the body; the main part, it seems, of which a Mahometan man consists. And must he not be very stupid, who can suffer himself to be persuaded that such conceits (conceits favourable indeed to pleasure, and indulgent to the flesh, but contrary to virtue, prejudicial to the spirit and reason of man) should come from the God of wisdom and holiness? Further, how Mahomet was inspired, his stories alone will evince; stories patched up out of old histories corrupted, mingled, and transplaced; interlarded with fabulous legends, contrary to all probable records of history, (the names, places, times, and all the circumstances whereof he most unskilfully changes and confounds) yea repugnant to the nature and possibility of things; so that in a manner every tale he tells is an evident argument of an ignorant and an impudent impostor; and he that so blunders and falsifies about matters of fact, who will trust him in matters of right and reason? which things, if it were worth the while, might by various instances be showed; and you may every where receive satisfaction therein. The like might be said concerning its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue; the institution whereof no man therefore, without injury to the divine wisdom, can impute thereto. But I shall only add two further considerations upon this matter: one, that whatever is good or plausible in this religion (such as are some precepts of justice and charity, although these confined among themselves), may reasonably be supposed taken from Christianity, which being senior in standing, may (in points wherein both agree) well go for the mistress; and however, that, upon the score of such doctrines or laws, we have no reason to think this religion came from God; for why should he reveal that again, which in a larger extent upon better grounds, with more advantage, he had declared before; which also then was commonly embraced and acknowledged? I also observe, that this religion, by its own free concessions, doth evidently destroy itself; for it admits Christianity once to have been a true doctrine, proceeding from and attested to by God; but Christianity did ever declare itself to be a general, perpetual, perfect, and immutable rule of faith and practice; that never any accessions thereto, any alterations thereof, ought to be made or admitted; that whatever spirit, coming after, it should offer to innovate, or pretend to new discoveries contrary to, or different from it, must be suspected of delusion, foretelling and forewarning against such endeavours that should appear, as fallacious and mischievous: this, it appears (by the writings of those who first planted Christianity, writings which no man in his wits can question to be theirs; being through a continual uninterrupted course of times, from the beginning, by general consent of both friends and adversaries, acknowledged and attested to as so; all characters within them imaginably proper for that purpose, confirming the same; as also by the current tradition of their disciples, immediate and mediate, extant in records

unquestionable, and by all other means conceivable), this, I say, it most plainly appears, was one grand doctrine and pretence of Christianity at first, which the Mahometans acknowledging originally true and divine in the gross, must consequently grant itself to be an imposture.

And thus much seems sufficient to demonstrate that religion not to be of a divine extraction. I shall next proceed to consider the pretences of Judaism, and to show that neither it was such a perfect revelation as we proved it probable God would vouchsafe to make. But that shall be the subject of another Discourse.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XV.

OF THE IMPERFECTION OF THE JEWISH RELIGION.

EPH. i. 13.—*In whom ye also* (trusted), *having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT it is probable God should vouchsafe to mankind a full and clear declaration of his mind and will concerning their duty and their welfare, I did show: that Paganism and Mahometanism, without reason and truth, did or do pretend thereto, I also briefly discoursed: I now proceed to examine the plea which Judaism puts in, and to make good that neither it is well grounded (which, as the cause deserves, I shall do somewhat more largely.) The Jewish religion we acknowledge had its birth from the revelation and appointment of God; its truth and its goodness we do not call in question:[a] but yet, looking into it, we shall find it in many respects defective, and wanting the conditions due to such a revelation as we require. For it was not universal (neither being directed to, nor fitted for, the nature and needs of mankind;) it was not full and complete, it was not designed to be of perpetual obligation or use.

1. First, I say, this revelation was not general; not directed to, or intended for to instruct and oblige mankind: itself expressly affirms so much; the whole tenor and frame thereof shows it; so do all the circumstances of its rise and progress. That it was intended peculiarly for that small nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth; distinguished, and indeed, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind both on purpose and in effect; for it so remained for many ages (till the Macedonian first, and afterward the Roman conquests opened the world, and disclosed them) hid in a solitary obscurity; even so far as to scape the observation of the most inquisitive surveyors of the earth, the most curious searchers into the customs of all people (as of Herodotus for instance, who, nicely describing the places and manners of the people all about them, could not discern them, and takes no notice of them, although for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable, and deserving his mention;) appears by express passages in their law and holy writings. *He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation; and his judgments they have not known them.*[b] It is plainly affirmed that God did make that discovery of his will and mind peculiarly to that people, and to no other: *I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine*, saith God to the Jews: *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth*, saith Moses in his address to God: *Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; The Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth,** saith Moses to that people: which passages (together with divers others of the same import) being used to engage and encourage a singular obedience, do plainly say, that God transacted with that people singly and separately from all other; taking them on purpose, as it were, into a corner, at a good distance, and beyond hearing of others, that he might there signify alone to them his

[a] Heb. vii. 18, 19.

* Lev. xx. 26; Exod. xxxiii. 16, They were not to marry, not to trade, to converse, &c.—*Vide Grot. in Evang.* p. 130.—Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2.

[b] Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.

pleasure, peculiarly concerning them. Yea, to this purpose, of maintaining a distance and distinction from the rest of mankind, divers of their laws were appointed; as not only the nature of such laws doth imply, but words annexed to them sometimes express: *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people; ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean.*[c] Whence St. Paul calls their law μεσότοιχον φραγμοῦ, a *partition* wall, that fenced that nation, and severed it from others;[d] and an enmity, being framed to set them in distance and variance from the rest of men. That whole business also of this constitution is frequently styled a covenant, *made*, not between God and mankind, but between God and that single nation;[e] a covenant in formal terms mentioning them, and them only; sealed with marks and characters peculiar to them: requiring conditions and duties possible or proper only for them to perform; exhibiting promises only suitable to them; propounding rewards which they only were capable to receive, and punishments which they only could undergo. *Hear, O Israel*, is the usual style, according to which those laws are directed: *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*,[f] is the introduction to the Decalogue itself (which among all parts of that law looks fairest toward a general importance and obligation; which yet is so specially directed, and is indeed peculiarly called the covenant between God and that people;[g] viz. *synecdochially*, as being the principal part directive of their duty.) In the body of the law itself, there is often made a distinction between them who were bound to observe it, and others that were not; between *brethren* and *strangers*; between *Hebrews* and *aliens*; with duties suited and limited in regard to that distinction (as in the cases of *remitting debts, releasing servants, exacting use*, and the like:) there are enjoined duties, which others could not properly or decently perform; such as observation of feasts in commemoration and thankfulness for mercies vouchsafed to that nation;[h] as also others which could not be observed by all men with any possibility or convenience; such as those of repairing thrice a-year to one certain place, established for God's worship; of bringing tithes and oblations thither, and the like; neither was the number of Priests and Levites, set apart for God's service, proportioned otherwise, than in respect to that one people. The encouragements also and rewards promised to obedience do incommunicably pertain to them, as also the discouragements from, and punishments for, disobedience; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the land of Canaan was the meed set before them, if they should obey and make good their part of the covenant; a dispossession thereof, or affliction in it, was the punishment threatened, if they should presume to disobey and violate those engagements: *Ye shall walk in all the laws which the Lord your God hath commanded you; that ye may live, and that it may be well with you;* and, *that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye possess. Hear ye therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.** Such were the promises exciting to obedience; and the threatenings deterring from disobedience were answerable, as every where in their law and story is visible.

I may also hereto add, that as the laws and rites of this religion were designed only for this people, as they did only agree to their circumstances; so they were only suited to their inclinations and their capacities; their inclinations, which were very stubborn and perverse; their capacities, which were very low and gross, as their own prophets do upon many occasions affirm and complain; being dissentaneous and repugnant to the common humour and genius of mankind: so experience discovered them to be, when they became more apparent and

[c] Lev. xx. 24. [d] Eph. ii. 14.
[e] Deut. iv. 13; xxix. 14, 25, &c.
[f] Deut. iv. 1; v. 1; vi. 3, &c; Psal. lxxxi. 8.
[g] Deut. iv. 13; Exod. xxxiv. 28.

* Deut. v. 33; vi. 3, &c. Moses novos ritus, contrariosque cæteris mortalibus indidit.—*Tac.* 5, Cætera instituta sinistra, fœda pravitate valuere.
[h] Deut. xvii. 15; i. 16; Exod. xxii. 25; Deut. xv. 3, 12; Lev. xxv. 47, &c.; Deut. vi. 1, 16; xiv. 21, &c.; Exod. xxiii. 19, &c.

observable; *Judæorum mos absurdus, sordidusque* (The *Jewish way of life is uncouth and sordid*, was Tacitus his censure; *Hist.* v. 5), and, They run counter to all men, was St. Paul's imputation on that people, 1 Thess. ii. 15; to which the general conceit of men concerning them did agree; so little plausible or probable was their way, so liable to dislike and contempt: which argues it unfit to be commended by the God of wisdom to the generality of mankind.

By which and many other like considerations obvious enough, may appear, that this dispensation was not (either according to its nature or in its design) general, or such as respected the main body of mankind, but rather very particular and restrained; designedly restrained to the obligation and use of one place or people, if compared to the world of men, inconsiderably narrow and small (the fewest of all people God himself says they were.) That, in fine, this constitution had only the nature of a municipal law, imposing burdens and indulging privileges upon one city or territory;[i] not of a common civil sanction, established for the obligation, use, and benefit of the whole commonwealth, or empire subject to the Almighty King.

It is not, therefore, in reason to be taken for such a revelation as we argued needful for us, and to be expected from him, *who*, as the Psalmist, as reason, as experience tells us, *is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works;*[j] from him, who is the common Father of all, and, as St. Paul expresseth it, *hath made of one blood* πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, *the whole nation and commonwealth of mankind;* from him, who cannot be in affection anywise fond or partial, a respecter of persons or of nations, as St. Paul in the second to the Romans, and St. Peter in the Acts also implies.[k] From him, who is not only the Maker, but, as our apostle also styles him, *the Saviour of all men;* and, as even the Hebrew Wise Man asserts, *careth for all alike;* being *desirous that all men should be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth; not willing that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance.*[l] From him, who is not only φιλεβραῖος, or φιλέλληνν, (a lover of Jews, or of Greeks;) but φιλάνθρωπος, *a lover of men;* and φιλόψυχος, *a lover of souls;*[m] who, lastly, *is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also,*[n] as St. Paul urges this argument; and as also the reason of the thing and the voice of nature doth declare: from this God, I say, so disposed, so related toward us all, so equally concerned in regard to us;* so impartial in his affection, so unconfined in his bounty; we should have reason to expect rather no revelation at all, than one so scant, and pinched in such narrow bounds; so ill proportioned to the glory due to himself, to the need and benefit of mankind. We cannot reasonably imagine that he should contract the effects of his goodness, or the manifestations of his glory, to so slender a parcel of mankind (no better qualified, no more deserving such special regard, than the rest;[o] as himself, to repress their fond conceits, and probably in way of anticipation, to intimate his design of further extending that favour in due season to others, who might pretend thereto with as much right and reason as themselves, doth sometime declare.[p]) That he, who hath freely dispensed the influences of sun and stars to all alike, should cause the light of his heavenly truth to shine, as it were, but into one small closet of his spacious house; leaving all the rest, so many stately rooms thereof, encompassed with shades of ignorance and error; that he should pour down the showers of his blessings spiritual (otherwise than he hath done those natural) upon one only scarce discernible spot of ground; letting all the world beside (like a desert of sand) lie parched with drought, overspread with desolation and barrenness.

This revelation, therefore, was not in this respect sufficient; wanting in its na-

[i] Deut. vii. 7. [j] Psal. cxlv. 8.
[k] Acts xvii. 26, The King of the world, the Judge of the earth; Rom. ii.; Acts x. 34.

* Plat. Thæt.—οὐδεὶς Θεὸς δόσνους ἀνθρώποις.
[l] 1 Tim. iv. 10; ii. 4; Wisd. vi 7, 11, 23, &c.; 2 Pet. iii. 9.
[m] Tit. iii. 4; Wisd. xi. 26.
[n] Rom. iii. 29. [o] Deut. ix. 4.
[p] Matt. v. 45.

ture and design that due condition of generality and amplitude.* But,

2. Furtuher; As this revelation was particular, so was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his mind to all, so did he not therein speak out all his mind. Our apostle to the Hebrews chargeth it with blameableness (*εἰ πρώτη ἦν ἄμεμπτος, if the first covenant had been blameless;*[a]) with imperfection, with weakness, with improfitableness (*ἀθέτησις μὲν γὰρ γίνεται προαγούσης ἐντολῆς διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος· There is made an abolition of the precedent commandment for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: for the law made nothing perfect;*)† he means all this in degree, and in comparison to what was possible, and in some respects needful. Which charge may be easily made good (*a priori*), considering both the parts thereof which direct, and those which excite to practice; together with the means and aids enabling and facilitating obedience to the laws or rules enjoined; also (*a posteriori*), if we regard the fruits and effects thereof. Surveying first, I say, the directive part, we may observe both a redundancy in things circumstantial or exterior, and a defectiveness in things substantial and interior: there be ritual institutions in vast number very nicely described and strongly pressed; the observation of times and places, the distinction of meats and of habits (*touch not, taste not, handle not,*[r]) corporeal cleansings and purgations; modalities of exterior performance in sacrifices and oblations, those *δικαιώματα σαρκὸς*, (justifications of the mere flesh, that only concerned the body or outward man, and could not perfect the observer's conscience; could neither satisfy or edify his mind and inward man), we see with extreme punctuality prescribed and enjoined, some of them under very heavy penalties (of utter extermination and excision. While moral duties (duties of justice and charity, yea of temperance and sobriety itself) and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and which could not but be much more pleasing to God) were more sparingly delivered in precept, less clearly explained, not so fully urged with rational inducements, nor in a due proportion guarded with rewards. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitly connived at (as polygamy and divorce, some kinds of retaliation, cursing, revenge; some degrees of uncharitableness) which even natural reason dislikes, or condemns. So faulty was that dispensation, as to the part thereof directive of life; and it was no less in that part, which promotes and secures good practice, by applying fit excitements to obedience, and fit restraints from disobedience; rightly managing those great instruments and springs of human activity, natural courage, hope, and fear. Nothing so damps men's alacrity in endeavour, as desperation or diffidence of good success; nothing so quickens it, as a confidence or strong presumption thereof: and how then could they be very earnest in endeavours to please God, who were not assured of (yea, had so much reason to diffide in) God's placability and readiness, upon repentance, to forgive sins wilfully and presumptuously committed, such as no man surely lives altogether free from? The not opening a door of mercy seems discouraging and apt to slacken performance of duty; what was then the shutting it up close, the bolting it with that iron bar, *Cursed is he that abides not in all things written in this law to do them;*[s] which at least will exclude assurance, will quash the hopes of mercy;[t] will consequently enervate the siniews of care and industry in serving God. Neither were the rewards of either kind (those that spurred to obedience, those that stopped from disobedience) in measure or in kind such as the reason of things doth afford and require. They were only temporal, and chiefly corporeal or sensible; such as belonged to the outward state of this transitory life, which neither can deserve much regard, nor are apt to have great efficacy:* for who will in effect, why should any man in reason, highly value the ac-

* Ἐπὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς ὁ νόμος ἔκειτο, ὅτε οὐ πολλὴ ἀρίστης πολιτείας ἡ ἀκρίβεια, ὅτε εἰσαγωγὴ τοῦ θείου ἦν, ὅτε παιδικὰ τὰ παραγγέλματα, ὅτε τὸ γάλα, ὅτε ὁ παιδαγωγός, ὅτε ὁ λύχνος, ὅτε ὁ τύπος, καὶ ἡ σκιά.—Chrys. tom. vi. Or 44.

† Heb. vii. 18; Gal. iii. 21. οὐ δυν. ζωοποιεῖν. Rom. viii. 3, τὸ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, ἐν ᾧ ἠσθένει.

[a] Heb. viii. 7. [r] Heb. ix. 9, 10.

* Ὅτε πάντα ἦν σαρκικὰ, καὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ λόγος οὐδείς.—Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 98.——Περὶ οὐρανίων οὐδέποτε λόγος ἦν, οὐδὲ μελλόντων μνήμη, &c. Chrys. ad Olymp. β'. p. 60; *Vide* tom. vii. p. 16.

[s] Deut. xxvii. 26. [t] Gal. iii. 10.

commodations of this short and uncertain life? who will, who should be, greatly terrified with the inconveniences thereof? whom, probably, would such considerations sufficiently animate to encounter and sustain the perils, the difficulties, the troubles, and the disgraces, to which often the practice of virtue is exposed? whom would they guard from the enchantments of pleasure, profit, and honour, alluring men to sin? the pleasures of sense, how improper an encouragement, how unworthy a recompense are they for the labours and achievements of virtue! incomparably better surely, more worthy of regard, and more effectual upon man's reason, more apt to produce and to promote real virtue and hearty piety, are the rewards concerning the future state of our immortal soul; which yet it is a question whether that law doth ever mention; it is plain it doth not clearly propound and apply them. Indeed as to evident discovery concerning the immortality of man's soul, or the future state, so material a point of religion, of so grand moment and influence upon practice, even the Gentile theology, assisted by ancient common tradition, seems to have outgone the Jewish, grounding upon their revealed law; the pagan priests more expressly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the Hebrew prophets; a plain instance and argument of the imperfection of this religion.

I subjoin, God's not thereby (in an ordinary certain way, according to any pact or promise) affording or exhibiting such interior influences of grace upon the minds of men, as, considering the natural frailty, blindness, and impotency of men, appears necessary to render them obedient to the rules of duty, to guide them in the ways of truth and goodness, to free them from error and sin, to shield and animate them against temptation; is a main defect in that religion; apt to breed fear in the onset upon duty, to nourish doubt in the performance thereof, to settle despair upon a fall or defeat. It presented to men's eyes the obligation to duty, the difficulty thereof, the danger of transgressing it, but did not only represent the means requisite to perform it. And what can be more discouraging or discomforting, than to see oneself, upon great peril and penalty, obliged to that, which is apparently very hard, or, considering his strength, impossible, no help or support being visible? especially joining the consideration before touched, that no evasion by pardon, no rise by repentance doth appear. Whence we may well infer, that indeed, in effect, this dispensation was what St. Paul calls it, διακονία θανάτου, and διακονία κατακρίσεως, *a ministry of death and condemnation; a subjection to a curse; a killing letter;* bearing nothing less in the looks and language thereof, than certain death and unavoidable ruin;[u] a lying under insupportable slavery, both to the guilt and punishment of sin. *If thou doest ill, sin lieth at the door.*

Neither, in discoursing thus, do we lay any misbeseeming imputation upon God, the author of that religion;[v] the making so imperfect a revelation nowise being disagreeable to his wisdom, his goodness, or his justice. As for a time he might withhold the declaration of his mind to all mankind, so might he, upon the same or like grounds of wise counsel, forbear to declare some part thereof to that people: no special reason appears that could oblige, that might induce him not to be reserved, as well in part to these few men, as in whole to those, all the rest of men; yea, there be good reasons assignable, why the divine wisdom should be then so sparing of its mind, why God should only show his back parts, as it were, to Moses, and *not let him see his face;* not discover all of his nature and of his pleasure to him; why then he should seem to delight in, to lay so much stress on those carnal and ceremonious observances; why he should forbear to exact that height of spiritual duty, and not draw men to compliance with the best motives of pure reason. A dawning of light perhaps more became that morning of times than a meridian brightness; that infancy of the world was not, it may be, ripe for a more deep and perfect instruction; that nation, however, to whose state, to whose disposition and capacity, those laws and institutions were adapted, was very unfit for the highest and hardest lessons. For a nation, it

[u] 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9; Gal. iii. 10; 2 Cor. iii. 6.
[v] Gen. iv. 7.

was (as from infallible hands we have it not wise, or considerate; not grave, or constant; not meek, or pliable; but a very stupid and heady, a very fickle and humourous, a very froward and stubborn generation of men: *They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding*, was said of them at first by him who delivered their law, or rather by God himself, who enjoined it:[w] and, *I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee*, saith the prophet concerning *the house of Jacob*;[x] alluding, it seems, to those many passages in the law where they are termed *a stiffnecked people*: uncapable thence both of the finest notions and the more rigorous precepts;[y] like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and the unruliness of their passion, they were not οἰκεῖοι ἀκροαταί, *proper auditors*, of a more pure and accurate discipline; wherefore as such the divine wisdom and goodness was pleased to deal with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, condescending to the meanness of their capacities, feeding them with milk, alluring them with petty shows, scaring them with frightful appearances, indulging them innocent trifles, pastimes, and sports; so tempering his ordinances as might best serve to keep them in good humour; to draw and entice them easily unto somewhat good, to curb and restrain them from mischief. Whence St. Paul calls those institutions with good reason *elements* (*poor and mean elements*, and *elements of the world; rudiments of knowledge and discipline*,[z] suited to the capacity of the first age, and the meanest rank; such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn, and able to practice;) with good reason he calls the law a *pedagogue*, that by instilling into those νήπιοι (those *infants*,[a] or little children, so also he terms them), some imperfect notions of truth; by keeping them in some good order, did prepare them for a higher instruction, did predispose them toward a better course of life. Indeed, we may easily conceive that such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish and plebeian fancies: but to men of somewhat elevated minds, and well improved reason; of sound judgment, and large experience; who had tasted, and could relish, rational entertainments (and such in some measure and comparatively are men generally born and brought up in countries and places where civility hath obtained; at least they are capable of being so, fit means being used to render them so), they must needs be insipid and disgustful. In the study of truth and practice of virtue, there are alluring beauties and sweetnesses; which it cannot but displease him, who hath seen and felt them, to be diverted from by an obligation to attend so precisely upon such an abundance of petty, circumstantial, exterior observances; to be forced, I say, to chew such husks of things, to him who thereby must neglect so delicious kernels, cannot but be grievous and irksome. Wiser men are never much affected with laborious and tedious pomps; they are designed always to amuse children and the common sort. I add, that this dispensation was suited not only to the childish fancy, but to the slavish spirit of that people; who, having in them little of ingenuity, or willingness freely to do good, would be apt to wax not only dronish and lazy, but sturdy and insolent, had they not been kept under, and inured to something of burden and toil. Such all wise men know to be the proper course of managing people of slavish temper; but toward men of a disposition more ingenuous, tractable, and free, such as commonly men civilized and well governed are or may become, such a proceeding were incongruous; they will either refuse to undergo such unnecessary burdens, or bear them unwillingly; their obedience will be none, or lame, or unkindly and heartless. God therefore dealt according to wisdom with the Jews, when he imposed such burdens upon their shoulders, when he pinched their stiff necks with such yokes, when he detained them in such fetters; so they were, and so they are truly called by our apostles; burdens intolerably heavy;

[w] Deut. xxxii. 28; Jer. iv. 22; v. 4; Neh. ix.
[x] Isa. xlviii. 4.
[y] Deut. xxxi. 27; Exod. xxxii. 9; Deut. ix. 6, 13, &c.; Psal. lxxviii. 36. 57.
[z] Gal. iv. 9, 3. [a] Gal. iii. 24; iv. 9.

yokes very galling and vexatious; fetters very strait and grievous;[b] which they reasonably therefore reckon it a very valuable privilege and benefit, purchased by our Saviour for us, to be loosed from. But such a dispensation could not be convenient for the rational nature in common and for perpetuity: it neither becomes God himself, who will not without need or profit vex his creatures; who cannot be fully satisfied with performances of so mean a sort; who necessarily doth affect services of a more excellent nature and importance (those spiritual services of love, reverence, and gratitude, of purity, righteousness, and goodness.) It doth not suit man, not being apt to perfect his nature, not being able to satisfy his mind. As he, by the improvement and use of his reason, will easily discern the small worth of such performances, so will he not readily comply with them without regret; but will soon apprehend the matter to be indeed, as St. Paul represents it, that an obligation to such rites is *a bond against us* (ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν, ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν), which in reason he may expect to be wiped out and *cancelled*;[c] that a law consisting of such precepts hath an *enmity*, or repugnance to his nature; that such a dispensation is a *pupillage*, and a *slavery*, which he earnestly must desire to be redeemed and emancipated from.[d]

Thus doth this revelation upon many respects, grounded on the very intrinsic nature thereof, appear partial and imperfect; and consequently not such as that which we reasonably may expect from the divine wisdom and goodness.

It is true, which some may deem an objection against our discourse, but I should rather take for a good confirmation thereof, that God did afterward annex some labels, as it were, to this deed; that he imparted by degrees further manifestations of light and grace to that people, by the instructions, and by the exemplary practices of prophets and holy men raised up among them by his especial instinct and order; in a manner and upon occasions extraordinary. The prophets frequently declared that God had not much delight in those ceremonious observances; nor would accept them any otherwise than as proceeding from good dispositions of mind, and as accompanied with practices of moral duty and more spiritual piety: that he chiefly did require of them hearty reverence toward himself, and submission to his will; strict justice, and tender charity toward their neighbours; meekness and patience in their behaviour; temperance and sobriety in all their conversation.[e] By them also he discovered more of his gracious disposition, and of his merciful intentions toward them; that he would not be extremely rigorous in punishing the transgressions of his law; that he would not refuse pardon to the most grievous sins, not remain irreconcilable toward the most heinous offenders, upon their sincere repentance and amendment of life. By the practices of holy men he also showed, that the rigour of that ceremonious law was mitigable; that in some cases its obligation might be relaxed, and its observance dispensed with; that a service more refined and rational was especially acceptable to God;[f] that he loved a purer devotion, a perfecter righteousness, a higher charity, than such as the letter of their law prescribed.[g] By them also he intimated, which their devotions plainly infer, that he not only exacted such duties, but was ready to afford them his assistance to the performing them; by teaching and admonishing them within; enlightening their minds, and inflaming their affections; directing, exciting, and quickening them to obedience. Thus did that morning of divine knowledge, from the first dawning, by degrees grow more lightsome; yet never arrived to a perfect day-light; the shadows were not quite dispersed; the whole horizon of heavenly truth was not disclosed thereby. Even those arbitrary and extraordinary dispensations of further instruction are so many good arguments, that God did not primarily intend the Jewish law for a complete delivery of his mind; his reserving so much to be upon occasion detected,

[b] Acts xv. 10, 28; Gal. v. 1; iii. 23.
[c] Coloss. ii. 14.
[d] Gal. iii. 24; iv. 1, 3, 5, &c.

[e] Isa. lxvi. 3; i. 11, 12, 13, &c.; Mic. vi. 7; Hos. vi. 6; Psal. l. 8, 9, &c.; li. 16; l. 14; li. 6, 17; Isa. i. 16, 17; lviii. 6; Mic. vi. 8; Hos. vi. 6; Psal. cxxx. 3, 4; Isa. i. 18; lv. 7; Ezek. xviii. 21; xxxiii. 12.
[f] Matt. xii. 3.
[g] Psal. li. 6, 17.

implied that more still might rest behind; accordingly, as indeed we see, that the future state, and immortality itself, was not by the prophets fully brought to light; that the better covenant, established upon better assurances, was not yet revealed; that all means requisite for the glory of God, for the good of man, were not thoroughly provided for.[h]

Of which conclusion we shall add this one further probation, that Judaism did not serve, in effect, sufficiently to better men's lives; to qualify a competent number of men for God's favour, or for their own happiness; by disposing their minds to any tolerable degree of true sanctity, piety, and righteousness acceptable to God, profitable to human society, perfective of man's nature. It is a point that St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans insisteth much upon, and excellently applies to this same purpose. The Jews were highly conceited of their way, scorning the rest of men as altogether ignorant of God's will, and uncapable of his favour; but St. Paul represses their arrogance, by showing the difference was not so great, as they imagined, between them and others, not even in those respects; for that the special revelation, which they were so proud of, had not produced effects considerably better in them, than the light of reason and the law of nature (means so despicable in their esteem) had brought forth in others;[i] which charge being made good, it is evident they had no reason to prize their way so much; or to confide therein, as perfect; as thoroughly, in the best manner, and in reasonable measure, sufficient to qualify them for God's favour, or to bring them into a state of happiness; yea, it is plain, upon that supposition, in some respects their way had the disadvantage, and made their condition worse than that of other men; rendering their faults more grievous and inexcusable, more provoking God's displeasure against them; especially seeing, upon the tenor of their religion, they had scarce any better ground to presume of pardon or impunity, than other men had from instincts of nature, from rational conjecture. Now that such a charge upon them is no slander, we need no other probations than what the continual stream of their own histories doth represent concerning their manners; than the many full and plain testimonies of their own prophets concerning them; than the extreme punishments by divine justice inflicted upon them; than the common reputation they have continually had among men, grounded upon experience. What is their history but one continued tragedy, as it were, setting out the various strange rebellions and apostacies of that people, with the miserable consequences proceeding from them? What do their prophetical writings contain beside pathetical expostulations, severe reproofs, dreadful comminations of judgment upon them, for their prodigious impieties, iniquities, and lewdnesses; general in extension over all persons, excessive in degree, by no means curable or corrigible? *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, that place of universal concourse, the heart of that nation, the special seat and sanctuary of their religion), *see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it*, says Jeremiah, v. 1. *There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof* (of Jerusalem), *like a roaring lion ravening the prey; her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; her princes are like wolves; the people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery: and I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none*, saith Ezekiel:[j] and the rest frequently harp upon the same thing. But these prophets, you will say, lived in unhappy times; so circumstantiated, that no religion could have much prevailed upon men's minds and lives; such as make every religion liable to the same exceptions: well, but Isaiah, one would think, lived in better times; for how many better kings had that nation, that more strictly practised or earnestly promoted piety, than Hezekiah? yet, *A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquities,*

[h] Heb. viii. 6; xi. 13, 40.
[i] Rom. ii.
[j] Ezek. xxii. 25-30.

a seed of evil doers, were they, it seems, even then; *the land was defiled under the inhabitants thereof; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head, there was no soundness in the body of that nation.*[k] Yea, when did that religion flourish in greater vigour and strength, when had it more advantage of exerting its best virtue, than in the peaceful and prosperous times of that great and mighty, that good and zealously pious prince, king David? yet, even in his reign, according to his own observation and testimony, *they were*, generally, *corrupt and did abominable works; they all were gone aside, and were altogether become filthy; there was none that did good, no not one.*[l] But we need not urge particular instances, since we have it so often affirmed in gross, that the manners of that people, from first to last, were constantly naught and offensive to God: *The children of Israel and the children of Judah* (saith God himself in Jeremiah) *have only done evil before me from their youth.* And again: *Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me.*[m] The law, although by extraordinary persons, in fittest opportunities, with utmost vehemence and diligence inculcated and urged upon them, proved continually ineffectual to produce the fruits of piety and righteousness. The same you may see confessed by Ezra;[n] and not only acknowledged, but evidently demonstrated, by Nehemiah, in a punctual narration, deduced from the beginning to his time, in the ninth chapter of that book.[o] Again: The heavy calamities by divine justice so often inflicted, so long continued upon them; and, at last, God's so visible utter dereliction and disowning them, do also sufficiently declare what their deserts, and what their qualities have been; as also what good may ever be expected from them. For as God never punishes grievously without a proportionate cause; so he never quite deserts, but in a desperate case, when no competent emendation may be expected. He is not wont to lop off the branches, but when they grow dead and barren; he never cuts down the tree, while there is any hope of fruit. This providence therefore toward that people shows, that in God's esteem that law is to be laid aside, as an instrument grown useless, and unfit for his purposes; unfit to serve his glory; to further men's good.

I add; that through all course of times their manners have not procured in a manner from any men any good-will or respect; but indeed the common dislike, contempt, and hatred of men; they have always (since well known and observed in the world) been reputed a sort of people not only above all men vain and superstitious, addicted to fond conceits and fabulous stories, but extremely proud and arrogant, churlish and sour, ill-natured and false-hearted toward all men; not good or kind, yea not so much as just or true, toward any but themselves;

> (Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
> Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos;
> *Juv. Sat.* xiv.

Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium.[p]) Such are the obvious characters of them, such were their humours noted to be; humours not only implausible, but really blameable, deservedly offensive and odious; being contrary to the common sense, to the natural ingenuity of man. They have been long, as we see them now to be, partly for the vanity of their conceits, partly for the baseness of their minds and manners, and partly also for the wretchedness of their condition, the scorn and obloquy of all nations.

Now the tree, which hath always bore such fruits (so unsavoury, so unwholesome), we have no reason to admire, to esteem excellent and perfect. It might be good for those times, when men willingly did feed on acorns, on crabs, on bramble-berries; but cannot so well serve now, when higher improvements of reason, when philosophy and learning, by a general influence upon the world, have prepared the palates of men to relish,

[k] Isa. i. 4, 5, 6. [l] Psal. xiv. 53.
[m] Jer. xxxii. 30; vii. 25; xvi. 12; xi. 7.
[n] Ezra. ix. 7. [o] Neh. ix.

[p] Tac. v. p. 621; *vide* Grot. de Jure B. lib. ii. 15. 9.

their stomachs to digest, more delicious and more wholesome fare. But,

3. I proceed to show the third defect, which I at first observed in this religion, that it was not designed for perpetual obligation and use. (As it was particular in respect of the persons to whom it was directed, whom it obliged; as it was partial and incomplete in its frame, so it was, according to its design, temporary and mutable.) This conclusion we might infer from what hath been said concerning the narrow extent, and concerning the intrinsic imperfection thereof; for supposing a new general and perfect revelation made to mankind (such as we asserted probably should be), that would naturally swallow and void those which are particular and imperfect; as comprehending them, it would render them useless; as supplying the defects, correcting the defaults, or removing, paring away the superfluities of them, it would discover them unfit for continuance. As rivers run into the sea, as shadows flee before the sun, so these small and shallow, these dusky and faint revelations would discharge themselves into, would vanish before a complete and universal one. Nothing in nature or in providence that is scant or defectuous, can be stable and lasting. Thus, I say, is this a conclusion, a consequence of those which preceded; but we have another more convincing sort of evidence to prove it by (most valid *ad homines*), even by many pregnant intimations; yea, many express remonstrances and predictions, that God did intend in due time to introduce a great change in affairs of this kind; to refine and reform the state of things;[t] to break open those enclosures, and to remove those bars of separation; to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, and to receive all nations into the fold of his most special care and love. In fine, that he would dispense a general full revelation of his mind and will, of his grace and favour to mankind; such as should not be consistent with that particular and partial law, such as implies a disannulling thereof for obligation, and disabling it for use. The holy writings of that people acquaint us, that God intended *to raise up another Prophet* (for extraordinariness and eminency) *like to Moses, which should have words by God put into his mouth:*[r] new words surely, new revelations fron God; for why should he with that solemnity be sent to utter stale matters? whom they should, upon peril of their lives and welfare, be particularly obliged to hearken (that is, to yield attention and obedience) unto. That *the days should come, when the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel,*[s] different from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt; not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon men's hearts; in regard to which passage we may with the apostle to the Hebrews well argue, *If the first had been faultless*, and designed to abide in force, *there would have been no place found for the second;*[t] and that, by speaking of a new covenant, he antiquated, or declared his intention to antiquate, the old one.

That time should be, when they should say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord, neither should it come to mind, neither should they remember it, neither should they visit it;[u] they are the words of the prophet Jeremiah, concerning better times to come; wherein God *should give them pastors according to his own heart, which should feed them with knowledge and understanding;*[v] but in a way, it is evident, altogether different from the Jewish institution; without any regard to the ark of their covenant, that seat and emblem of God's especial presence among them.

That *another priesthood* should infallibly (for God swore so much) be established, not *after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek;*[w] (not appointed to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedicitions.)

That time should be, *when God would gather all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory;*[x] and out of them *God would take* (that which the Mosaical constitution would not anywise permit) *for priests, and for Levites.*

That there should appear a *Zion*, a mountain seated above all mountains (visible and conspicuous to all the world), wherein God would place his perpetual

[q] Mal. iii. 1, 3; Heb. ix. 10.

[r] Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Acts iii. 23.
[s] Jer. xxxi. 31.
[t] Heb. viii. 7, 13.
[u] Jer. iii. 16.
[v] Jer. iii. 15.
[w] Psal. cx. 4.
[x] Isa. lxvi. 18, 21.

residence, the seat of his worship, of his especial presence and influence, to *which all nations should flow*, or willingly resort, to learn God's will, and walk in his ways;[y] which Zion could not be that literal one, long since desolated and disregarded; and which, however, did it stand in repute, could be no convenient receptacle, or resort, for all the world; it is surely another spiritual Zion, or mystical rock, which is prophesied of.

That God will create new heavens and a new earth (a thoroughly new world, or new state of things;) such *as that the former should not be rememberd nor come into mind.*[z]

That God would *pour his spirit* of prophecy *upon all flesh;*[a] (although we see the prophetical spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation, not so much as any pretence thereto remaining.) *That the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;*[b] (Judaism surely is not this knowledge, which never did, nor is ever likely to fill the earth.) That *from the rising of the sun, to the going down thereof, God's name should be great among the Gentiles;* and *in every place incense should be offered unto his name, and a pure offering;*[c] (In every place incense, acceptable to God, should be offered; not only at Jerusalem, to which the Jewish service was confined.) That a time was *determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sins; to make a reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy; and to anoint the most Holy.*[d]

That God would send him, so much needed and *desired by all nations, to whom the gathering of the people should be; the Sun of righteousness, arising with salvation in his wings; the Redeemer that should come to Zion; the Messenger of the covenant, whom God would give for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritage; the righteous Branch, to be raised up unto David; to reign and prosper, executing judgment and justice in the earth; whose name should be called, The Lord our Righteousness;* whom God *would anoint to preach good tidings to the meek, and bind up the broken-hearted,*[e] &c.; that is, in fine, God in due time would send the Messias, to enlighten the world with a perfect instruction; to reveal God's will, and declare his mercy to mankind; to erect a universal spiritual kingdom in the minds and hearts of men, reducing them to fuller knowledge and to better obedience of God. These places of scripture, to which many others might be added, do sufficiently evince that the Mosaical dispensation was in the design thereof mutuble and transitory; that God intended, what the apostle affirms effected by our Saviour, an abrogation of the precedent command for his weakness and unprofitableness.[f] Thus doth God's design concerning the abolition of this religion appear by verbal testimonies; the same we see also declared by real effects: his providence hath made good his word; he hath not only disobliged men from that religion, but hath manifestly discountenanced it; yea, hath disabled even the most obstinate adherents in opinion and will thereto from the practice and exercise thereof, according to its primitive rules and prescriptions. Long is it (for above fifteen hundred years) since they, exiled from their ancient country, and scattered over the world, have wanted a place whither to resort, wherein to perform those most weighty parts of worship and service to God, oblation of sacrifices, incense and tithes; their tribes being confounded, the distinction of priesthood and people seems taken away; all the mysterious emblems of God's special presence, all the tokens of God's favour and endearment to them, are embezzled and quite lost; nothing is left substantial or solemn in their religion, which if they would they could put in practice: all that they retain of their ancient institution is the observation of some petty formalites, in matters of less importance; which also they have so blended and corrupted with impure mixtures of their own device and forgery, false and im-

[y] Psal. cxxxii. 13; Micah iv. 1, 2, 7, &c.; Joel ii. 28; iii. 16.
[z] Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22.
[a] Joel ii. 28.
[b] Hab. ii. 14.
[c] Mal. i. 11.
[d] Dan. ix. 24.
[e] Hag. ii. 7; Gen. xlix. 10; Mal. i. 3; iv. 2; Isa. lix. 20; xlix. 8; lxi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; Isa. lxi. 1.
[f] Heb. vii. 18.

pious opinions, ridiculous and uncouth ceremonies, idle and absurd stories, that we may justly suppose genuine Judaism nowhere to be found; that it cannot be, nor is indeed any where practised.

So that what reason showed fit to be, what God had declared should be, that experience doth attest to be done; the cessation and abolition of that way of religion, both as to obligation and use.

So I pass over this second step of my intended Discourse: that no other religion, excepting Christianity, which hath been, or is in being, can reasonably pretend to have proceeded from God, as a universal, complete, and final declaration of his mind and will to mankind. Such as we argued it probable that so wise a God, so just a Lord, so gracious a Father, would sometime afford to his poor miserable creatures and children, the sons of Adam.

I have two great steps yet to take: one, that Christianity is in itself a doctrine and law endued with the forementioned conditions; in all respects worthy to come from God, apt to promote his glory, and procure man's benefit. Another, that it *de facto* did proceed from God, was attested to by him, and established by his authority. Which propositions I shall hereafter, by God's grace, endeavour to prove.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVI.

OF THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

1 Cor. ii. 6.—*We speak wisdom to those which are perfect.*

The meaning of these words upon viewing the context, and weighing the scope of St. Paul's discourse, I take to be in effect this: that however such parts of the Christian doctrine, which St. Paul discovered unto those whom he began to instruct therein, *the milk which he gave the babes in Christ to drink,*[a] especially as propounded, proved, and persuaded in so plain and simple a manner, without advantages of subtile reasoning or elegant language, might seem to persons really ignorant, unskilful, and dull of apprehension (although much conceited of their own knowledge, wit, and reach), or to men prepossessed with contrary notions and corrupt affections, to be foolish and unreasonable: yet that the whole doctrine, such as it is in itself, being entirely disclosed unto *perfect men*, that is, to men of an adult and improved understanding, well disposed and capable, void of prejudicate conceits, and cleansed from vicious dispositions, would appear *wisdom;* wisdom, that is, not only exactly true, but highly important, and very well suited to the attainment of the best ends; even those ends, which it pretendeth to bring about, which are manifestly the most excellent that any knowledge can aim at; the glorifying of God, and salvation of man: this I suppose to be St. Paul's assertion here; and thereof it is my intent, by God's assistance, to endeavour now some declaration and proof, by representing briefly some peculiar excellencies and perfections of our religion; which may serve to evince the truth, and evidence the wisdom thereof; to make good, that indeed our religion well deserveth the privilege it doth claim of a divine extraction, that it is not an invention of man, but, as St. Paul calleth it, *the wisdom of God*, proceeding from no other author but the God of truth and wisdom.[b] It is indeed a common subject, and so the best ever should be; it is always profitable, and now seasonable, to inculcate it, for the confirmation of ourselves, and conviction of others, in this age of wavering and warping toward infidelity; wherefore, regarding more the real usefulness of the matter than the squeamish fancy of some auditors, I shall without scruple propound what my own meditation hath suggested about it.

1. The first excellency peculiar to the Christian doctrine I observe to be this; that it assigneth a true, proper, and complete character or notion of God* (complete, I mean, not absolutely, but in re-

[a] 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.

* Matt. xi. 27.—Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

[b] 1 Cor. ii. 7.

spect to our condition and capacity; such a notion as agreeth thoroughly with what the best reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, ancient tradition doth attest, and common experience doth intimate concerning God; such a character as is apt to breed highest love and reverence in men's hearts toward him, to engage them in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him. It ascribeth unto him all conceivable perfections of nature in the highest degree; it asserteth unto him all his due rights and prerogatives; it commendeth and justifieth to us all his actions and proceedings. For in his essence it representeth him one, eternal, perfectly simple and pure, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, independent, impassible, and immutable; as also, according to his essential disposition of will and natural manner of acting, most absolute and free, most good and benign, most holy and just, most veracious and constant; it acknowledgeth him the maker and upholder of all beings, of what nature and what degree soever; both material and immaterial, visible and invisible; it attributeth to him supreme majesty and authority over all. It informeth us, that he framed this visible world with especial regard to our use and benefit; that he preserveth it with the same gracious respect; that he governeth us with a particular care and providence; viewing all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to good ends, general or particular. It declareth him in his dealings with rational creatures very tender and careful of their good, exceedingly beneficent and merciful toward them; compassionate of their evils, placable for their offences, accessible and inclinable to help them at their entreaty, or in their need; yet nowise fond or indulgent to them; not enduring them to proceed in perverse or wanton courses; but impartially just, and inflexibly severe toward all iniquity obstinately pursued; it, in short, describeth him most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence: whatever perfections in essence, state, or practice, either philosophers (by rational collection from innate notions, or from contemplation of natural effects, or upon observing occurrences in human affair) or other institutions from the relics of primitive tradition, by politic reflection upon things, from other fountains, or by other means whatever, have by parts (imperfectly, obscurely, and faintly) attributed to God; all those our religion, in a full, clear, and peremptory manner, with advantage beyond what I can express, doth ascribe and assert unto him; not intermixing therewith (as other doctrines and institutions may be observed to do) any thing unworthy of him, or misbecoming him; adjoining nothing repugnant to that which natural light discerneth or approveth; but showing somewhat beyond what it can descry, concerning God's incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence, his unsearchable counsels of wisdom, his admirable methods of providence, whereby he hath designed to commend his goodness to us, and to glorify his justice: which sorts of truths exceeding man's reach to devise or comprehend as it becometh God (who so far transcendeth us in wisdom and knowledge) to reveal them; so they, wondrously conspiring with the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us, do argue or confirm the divinity of the doctrine which acquainteth us with them: for a doctrine, how plausible soever, which should teach us nothing about God, that by other means could not be found out, and whose bottom common sense might not fathom, there were no urgent cause why we should derive it from heaven, or why we should not rather deem it the invention of some witty or subtile man. But such a doctrine as this, (which as it telleth us nothing about divine things that contradicteth reason, so it informeth us many things which no understanding of man had ever conceived, none can penetrate), we may justly presume to come from a superior wisdom, we must at least avow it worthy of God; in the contrivances of man's wit or fancy about things of this nature, as in divers instances it hath happened, most probably many flaws and incongruities presently would have appeared; they would have clashed with themselves, or with the dictates of common reason: that, for instance, God should out of his own bosom send down his eternal Son to partake of our nature, and appear in our flesh, that with utmost advantage he might discover God's will and merciful intentions toward us, that he might set

before us an exact pattern of good life; that by his obedience and patience he might expiate our sin, and reconcile God to mankind; that he might raise in us a hope of, and lead us in the way to, happiness; this indeed is a mystery, and a depth of wisdom, which we should never have thought of, nor can yet thoroughly sound by thinking, which we better may admire, than we can understand: but neither doth good reason disallow it, nor can disprove it; yea, good reason so far confirmeth it, as it cannot but admit it to import nothing but that which is plainly true and most credible, the immense goodness and justice of God; concerning which nothing ought to seem strange or uncouth to us, since even by the care expressed in matters of ordinary providence, divine goodness appeareth so unaccountably vast and high, that upon consideration thereof, worthily might Job and the Psalmist exclaim, *What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him?*[c]

Now thus to instil into the minds of men a right and worthy notion of God, is palpably a great excellency of any doctrine or religion: for beside that a true knowledge of God (even barely considered as in way of theory most perfective of our understanding, it being conversant upon the noblest object of contemplation) is in itself very desirable; and upon the same ground error in divine things is no small evil or defect; both these, such knowledge and such error respectively, are very considerable, as having a powerful influence upon action; for according to men's conceptions about God is their practice, religious and moral, very much regulated: if men conceive well of God, they will be guided and moved thereby to render him a worship and an obedience worthy of him, and acceptable to him; if they are ignorant of him, or mistake about him, they will accordingly perform services to him, or pretences of service, which shall neither become him nor please him; (God by such misconceptions being transformed into an idol, their religion will become vile or vain superstition.*) And since all men apprehend the example of God a perfect rule of action, that they cannot do better than to resemble, and imitate him, such as they conceive God to be, such in good measure they will endeavour to be themselves, both in their disposition and demeanour; whence infallibly the virtues and defects which lie in their notion will exert and diffuse themselves into their life.

2. A second great excellency peculiar to the Christian institution is this, that it faithfully informeth us concerning ourselves, concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, and final; points about which otherwise by no reason, no history, no experience, we could be well resolved or satisfied: it teacheth us that we consist of a frail mortal body, taken from the earth and fashioned by God's hand, and immortal spirit, derived from heaven, and breathed out of God's mouth; whereby we understand the dignity of our nature and nobleness of our descent, our near alliance and our great obligation to God; and consequently how it concerneth us to behave ourselves, both in regard to God and toward ourselves, in a manner answerable to such a relation, worthy of such an high birth and quality: it showeth us, that we were originally designed by a voluntary obedience to glorify our Maker, in so doing to partake of joy and felicity from him; that accordingly we were created in a state agreeable to those purposes, wherein we were fit to serve God, and capable thereby ever to continue happy: but that by our unworthy distrust and wilful disobedience we cast ourselves from thence, and lapsed into this wretched state of inward blindness, error, and disorder, of outward frailty, sorrow, and trouble: it acquainteth us further, how being thus estranged from God, and exposed to the effects of his just displeasure, we are yet again, by his exceeding mercy and favour, put into a capacity of recovering ourselves, of being reinstated in a condition happy far beyond that from which we fell, by returning unto God,

[c] Job vii. 17; Psal. cxliv. 3.

* Isa. lxvi. 3, 1, 13, 14.—Εὐλόγως τοῖς μὲν μοχθηροῖς φαύλας ἔχειν τὰς περὶ θεοῦ διανοήσεις ἀνάγκη, τοῖς δὲ σπουδαίοις ἀρίστας.—Clem. Strom. vii. (p. 511.)

and complying with his will declared unto us; as also how continuing obstinately in our degeneracy and disobedience we shall assuredly plunge ourselves deeper into an abyss of endless misery: it fully representeth unto us, what shall be our future state and final doom, how it shall be suited to our demeanours and deserts in this life; what a strict trial, what a severe judgment, all our actions (even our passant words and our secret thoughts) must hereafter undergo; and how, upon the result, we shall become either exceedingly happy or extremely miserable for ever. It is indeed this doctrine only, which fully resolveth us about this weighty inquiry, which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much irresolution exercised philosophers, wherein the final end and happiness of man consisteth, and what is the way of attaining it; assuring us, that it consisteth not in any of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all, but in the favour and the enjoyment of God, with the blessings flowing thence; that this happiness is only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's holy laws, or by the practice of such a piety and such a virtue which this doctrine prescribeth, to be obtained. These most important truths, so useful both for the satisfaction of our minds, and the direction of our lives, this doctrine unfoldeth: I call them truths, and that really they are such even their harmony and consistence between themselves, their consonancy with inferences from all sorts of principles, which we can apply for learning of truth, with what about these matters reason collecteth, tradition reporteth, experience doth imply, may well persuade us; for that man was first made and constituted in a happy state; that he was for his misbehaviour detruded thence; that hence he is become so very prone to vice; and so much subject to pain; that our souls do abide after death; that after this life there shall be a reckoning and judgment, according to which good men (who here are often much afflicted) shall be rewarded with joy, and bad men (who commonly prosper here) shall be requited with pain, the wisest men upon these grounds, always have surmised; and their rational conjectures our religion with a positive and express assertion doth establish. So great a light doth it afford (which is no small perfection thereof) to the knowledge of ourselves and our chief concernments, the objects, next to God and what concerneth him, best deserving our inquiry and information.

3. It is a peculiar excellency of our religion, that it prescribeth an accurate rule of life, most congruous to reason, and suitable to our nature; most conducible to our welfare and our content;* most apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all; by the strict observance whereof, we shall do what is worthy of ourselves and most becoming us; yea, shall advance our nature above itself into a resemblance of the divine nature; we shall do God right, and obtain his favour; we shall oblige and benefit men, acquiring withal goodwill and good respect from them; we shall purchase to ourselves all the conveniences of a sober life, and all the comforts of a good conscience. For, if we first examine the precepts directive of our practice in relation to God, what can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are those duties of piety which our religion doth enjoin? What can be more fit, than that we should most highly esteem and honour him, who is most excellent? that we should bear most hearty affection to him, who is in himself most good, and most beneficial to us? that we should have a most awful dread of him, who is so infinitely powerful, holy, and just? that we should be very grateful unto him from whom we have received our being, with all the comforts and conveniences thereof? that we should entirely trust and hope in him, who can do what he will, and will do whatever in reason we can expect from his goodness, and can never fail to perform what he hath promised? that we should render all obedience and observance to him, whose children, whose servants, whose subjects we are born; by whose protection and provision we enjoy our life and livelihood? Can there be a higher privilege than liberty of access, with assurance of being favourably received in our needs, to him, who is thoroughly able to supply them? Can we desire upon easier

* As ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God,—1 Thess. iv. 1.

terms to receive benefits, than by acknowledging our wants, and asking for them? Can there be required a more gentle satisfaction from us for our offences, than confession of them, accompanied with repentance and effectual resolution to amend? Is it not, in fine, most equal and fair, that we should be obliged to promote his glory, who hath obliged himself to further our good? The practice of such a piety as it is apparently λογικὴ γατρεία, *a reasonable service*, so it cannot but produce excellent fruits of advantage to ourselves, a joyful piece of conscience, and a comfortable hope, a freedom from all superstitious terrors and scruples, from all tormenting cares and anxieties; it cannot but draw down from God's bountiful hands showers of blessings upon our heads, and of joys into our hearts; whence our obligation to these duties is not only reasonable, but very desirable.

Consider we next the precepts by which our religion doth regulate our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren (so it styleth all men, intimating thence the duties it requireth us to perform toward them;) and what directions in that kind can be imagined comparably so good, so useful, as those which the gospel affordeth? An honest pagan historian saith of the Christian profession, that *nil nisi justum suadet et lene;*[d] the which is a true, though not full, character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we should sincerely and tenderly love one another, should earnestly desire and delight in each other's good, should heartily sympathize with all the evils and sorrows of our brethren, should be ready to yield them all the help and comfort we are able, being willing to part with our substance, our ease, our pleasure, for their benefit or succour; not confining this our charity to any sorts of men, particularly related or affected toward us; but, in conformity to our heavenly Father's boundless goodness, extending it to all; that we should mutually bear one another's burdens, and bear with one another's infirmities, mildly resent and freely remit all injuries, all discourtesies done unto us; retaining no grudge in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting them with good wishes and good deeds. It chargeth us to be quiet and orderly in our stations, diligent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright in our dealings, observant of our relations, obedient and respectful toward our superiors, meek and gentle to our inferiors; modest and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our conversation, candid and benign in our censures, innocent and inoffensive, yea, courteous and obliging, in all our behaviour toward all persons. It commandeth us to root out of our hearts all spite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtiness, all evil suspicion and jealousy; to restrain our tongue from all slander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harsh language; to banish from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt, may needlessly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the public good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our ease or pleasure; rather discarding a less good from ourselves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or estimate the benefits that spring from the practice of these duties, either to the man that observeth them, or to all men in common? O divinest Christian charity, what tongue can worthily describe thy most heavenly beauty, thy incomparable sweetness, thy more than royal clemency and bounty!* how nobly dost thou enlarge our minds beyond the narrow sphere of self and private regard, into an universal care and complacence, making every man ourself, and all concernments to be ours! How dost thou entitle us unto, how dost thou invest us in, all the goods imaginable; dost enrich us with the wealth, dost prefer us with the honour, dost adorn us with the wisdom and the virtue, dost bless us with all prosperity of the world, whilst all our neighbour's good, by our rejoicing therein, becometh our own! how dost thou raise a man above the reach of all mischiefs and disasters, of all troubles and griefs, since nothing can disturb or discompose that soul, wherein thou dost constantly reside and absolutely reign! how easily dost thou, without pain or hazard, without drawing blood or striking stroke, render

[d] Am. Marc. l. 22.

* Τοιαύτη γὰρ ἡ τῆς ἀγάπης δύναμις· τοὺς οὐκ ἀπολαυσάντας τῶν ἀπολαυσάντων ἐξίσως ποιεῖ χαίρειν, κοινὰ τὰ τῶν πλησίον ἀγαθὰ πείθουσα νομίζειν.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

him that enjoyeth thee an absolute conquerer over all his foes, triumphant over all injuries without, and all passions within; for that he can have no enemy who will be a friend to all, and nothing is able to cross him who is disposed to take every thing well! How sociable, how secure, how pleasant a life might we lead under thy kindly governance! What numberless sorrows and troubles, fears and suspicions, cares and distractions of mind at home, what tumults and tragedies abroad, might be prevented, if men would but hearken to thy mild suggestions! What a paradise would this world then become, in comparison to what it now is, where thy good precepts and advices being neglected, uncharitable passions and unjust desires are predominant! How excellent then is that doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven, and would but men embrace thee, the peace and joy of heaven with thee!

If we further survey the laws and directions which our religion prescribeth concerning the particular management of our souls and bodies in their respective actions and enjoyments, we shall also find, that nothing could be devised more worthy of us, more agreeable to reason, more productive of our welfare and our content. It obligeth us to preserve unto our reason its natural prerogative, or due empire in our souls, and over our bodies, not to suffer the brutish part to usurp and domineer over us; that we be not swayed down by this earthy lump, not enslaved to bodily temper, not transported with tumultuary humours, not deluded by vain fancy; that neither inward propensions nor impressions from without be able to seduce us to that which is unworthy of us, or mischievous to us. It enjoineth us to have sober and moderate thoughts concerning ourselves, suitable to our total dependence upon God, to our natural meanness and weakness, to our sinful inclinations, to the guilt we have contracted in our lives; that therefore we be not puffed up with self-conceit, or vain confidence in ourselves, or in any thing about us (any wealth, honour, or prosperity.) It directeth us also to compose our minds into a calm, serene, and cheerful state; that we be not easily distempered with anger, or distracted with care, or overborne with grief, or disturbed with any accident befalling us; but that we be content in every condition, and entertain patiently all events, yea, accept joyfully from God's hand whatever he reacheth to us. It commandeth us to restrain our appetites, to be temperate in all our enjoyments, to abstain from all irregular pleasures, which are base in kind, or excessive in degree; which may corrupt our minds, or impair our health, or endamage our estate, or stain our good name, or prejudice our peace or repose: it doth not prohibit us the use of any creature, whence we may receive innocent convenience or delight, but indulgeth us a prudent and sober use of them all, with the sense of God's goodness, and thankfulness to him, who bestoweth them upon us. Our religion also further ordereth us (so far as our necessary occasions or duties permit) to sequester and elevate our minds from these low and transitory things, from the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights, of this world; things indeed unworthy the attention, unworthy the affection of an heaven-born and immortal spirit; that we should fix our thoughts, our desires, our endeavours upon objects most worthy of them, objects high and heavenly, pure and spiritual, infinitely stable and durable; *not to love the world, and the things therein, to be careful for nothing, but to cast all our care upon God's* providence; *not* to *labour for the meat that perisheth, not* to *trust in uncertain riches;* to have our treasure, our heart, our hope, our conversation above in heaven. Such directions our religion prescribeth; by compliance with which, if man be at all capable of being happy, assuredly his happiness must be attained; for that no present enjoyment can render a man happy, all experience proclaimeth; the restless motions we continually see, the woful complaints we daily hear, do manifestly demonstrate.

And who seeth not the great benefits and the goodly fruits accruing from observance of these laws and rules? Who discerneth not the admirable consent of all these particular injunctions in our religion with that general one, *Whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there*

be any virtue, or any praise, that we should mind such things, and practice them ?° Such, and far more excellent than I am able to describe, is the rule of Christian practice; a rule in perfection, in beauty, in efficacy, far surpassing all other rules; productive of a goodness morecomplete, more lovely, more sprightful, than any other doctrine or institution hath been or can be able to bring forth; much exceeding, not only *the righteousness of blind Pharisees*, but all the virtue of the most sage philosophers;* somewhat in part concurrent therewith philosophy had descried and delivered; (it is no wonder it should, since all of it is so plainly consonant to reason; yet what philosophy hath in this kind afforded, is in truth, if compared with what our religion teacheth, exceedingly meagre, languid, and flat: two words here, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*, do signify more, do contain in them more sense and savour, to the judgment and relish of a well disposed mind, than the Ethics of Aristotle, the Offices of Cicero, the Precepts and Dissertations of Epictetus, the many other volumes of philosophical morality, all put together; in matter our rule is far more rich and full, more sweet and sapid than theirs; in force and efficacy it doth also (as we shall hereafter see) far excel them.†

4. We may hereto annex this consideration, which may pass for another peculiar advantage of our religion, that as it delivereth so excellent and perfect a rule of life, so it delivereth it unto us pure from any allay embasing, free of any clog encumbering it; for that it chiefly, and in a manner only requireth of us a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties, plainly necessary or profitable; not withdrawing us from the practice of solid piety and virtue by obligations to a tedious observance of many external rites; not spending the vigour of our minds upon superficial formalities (or *busy scrupulosities*, as Tertullian termeth them*), such as serve only to amuse childish fancies, or to depress slavish spirits. It supposeth us men, men of good understanding and ingenuous disposition, and dealeth with us as such; and much more such it rendereth us, if we comply therewith. The ritual observances it enjoineth are as few in number, in nature simple and easy to perform, so evidently reasonable, very decent, and very useful; apt to instruct us in, able to excite us unto, the practice of most wholesome duties: which consideration showeth this doctrine to be complete, suitable to the most adult age and best constitution, to the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But further,

5. Our religion hath also this especial advantage, that it setteth before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice; wherein we have all its precepts compacted as it were into one body, and at once exposed to our view. Example yieldeth the most compendious instruction, together with the most efficacious incitement to action; but never was there, or could be, any example in either respect comparable to this;† never was any so thoroughly perfect in itself, so

° Τί ἄν τις εἴποι τῶν προσταγμάτων τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, τῶν οὐρανίων νόμων τὴν ἀρετὴν, τῆς ἀγγελικῆς πολιτείας τὴν εὐταξίαν; τοιοῦτον γὰρ ἡμῖν εἰσηγήσατο βίον, τοιούτους ἡμῖν ἔθηκε νόμους, τοιαύτην κατεστήσατο πολιτείαν, ὡς τοὺς τούτοις χρωμένους ἀγγέλους εὐθέως γίνεσθαι, καὶ ὁμοίους θεῷ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἡμετέραν.—Chrys. in Joh. i. 14.——Ὅσα παρὰ πᾶσι καλῶς εἴρηται, Χριστιανῶν ἐστι.—Just. M. Apol. 1.—*Vide* Lud. Viv. in Aug. de Civ. Dei, x. 4.

Quæ disputationes, quæ literæ quorumlibet philosophorum, quæ leges quarumlibet civitatum duobus præceptis, ex quibus Christus dicit totam legem prophetasque pendere, ullo modo sint comparandæ ?—*Aug. Epist.* iii. *ad Volus.*—*Vide* Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

† Δηλοῦν ἐθέλει τοῦνομα τὸ Χριστιανοῦ, ἄνδρα διὰ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώσεως καὶ διδασκαλίας, σωφροσύνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, καρτερίᾳ τε βίου καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀνδρίᾳ εὐσεβείας τε ὁμολογίᾳ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων θεοῦ διαπρέπειν.—Euseb. Hist. i. 4.

* *Vide* Grot. de Veritate, iv. 12; Phil. iv. 8.

* Negotiosæ scrupulositates.—*Tertull. in Marc.* 2.

Quædam pauca eademque factu facillima, et intellectu augustissima, et observatione castissima Dominus, et apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum, et celebratio corporis et sanguinis Domini.—*Aug. de Doct. Chr.* iii. 9.

Dominus noster Jesus Christus leni jugo nos subdidit, et sarcinæ levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, significatione præstantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit; sicuti est baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius, et siquid aliud in scripturis canonicis commendatur.—*Aug. Ep.* 118, *ad Januar.*

† Longum est iter per præcepta, breve et afficax per exempla.—*Sen.*

purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for imitation, or so forcibly engaging thereto, as this: there is not one flaw, one spot, one false or uneven stroke in all this copy, so that we are secure from doing amiss in transcribing any part thereof; it was intended to conduct us through all the parts of duty, especially those which are most high and difficult to our frail and decayed nature, general charity, self-denial, humility, and patience: it was admirably squared for the imitation of all men, the Person in whom it shined being, as it were, indefinite, and unrestrained to any single condition; he being in right and power superior to the greatest princes, though according to choice and in outward parts inferior to the meanest subjects; having under his command the largest wealth, although enjoying none; being able readily to procure to himself what glory and respect he pleased, yet pleasing to pass obscure and disregarded; so teaching those of highest rank to be sober and condescensive, those of lowest degree to be patient and content in their respective states; teaching all men not to rest in, nor much to regard, these present things, but singly in all their doings above all things to seek God's honour, with main resolution and diligence to prosecute his service: and as to all degrees, so to all capacities, was his practice suited, being neither austere nor remiss, formal nor singular, careless nor boisterous; but in a moderate, even, and uniform course, so tempered, that persons of all callings and all complexions easily might follow him in the practice of all true righteousness, in the performance of all substantial duties toward God and toward man. It is also an example attended with the greatest obligations and inducements to follow it; the great excellency and high dignity of the Person, being the most holy, first-born Son of God, heir of eternal majesty; our manifold relations to him, being our Lord and Master, our best Friend, our most gracious Redeemer; the many inestimable benefits received by us from him, all that redemption from extreme misery, and capacity of perfect happiness do import, are so many potent arguments engaging us to imitate him.

6. Further, our religion doth not only thus truly and fully acquaint us with our duty; but, which is another peculiar virtue thereof, it buildeth our duty upon most solid grounds, presseth it with most valid inducements, draweth it from the best principles, and driveth it to the best ends: no philosophy can in any measure represent virtue so truly estimable and eligible, can assign so evident and cogent reason why we should embrace it and strictly adhere thereto, can so well discover or describe the excellent fruits that grow upon it, as doth this philosophy of ours, as the ancient Fathers are wont to call it. Other philosophies have indeed highly commended virtue, and vehemently exhorted thereto; but the grounds on which they laid its praise are very sandy, the arguments by which they enforced its practice are very feeble, the principles from which they deduced it, and the ends which they propounded thereto, are very poor and mean, if we discuss them; at least if they be compared with ours: virtue, said they, is a thing of itself, upon account of its own native beauty and worth, abstracting from all reward or profit springing from it, very admirable and desirable; it is beside a very pleasant and very useful thing, begetting tranquillity and satisfaction of mind; yielding health, safety, reputation, pleasure, quiet, and other manifold conveniences of life: but can so magnificent and so massy a fabric of commendation stand firm upon such foundations as these? are these principles of love and admiration toward we know not what, these ends of temporal advantage and convenience, so noble or worthy? are the accommodations of this short and uncertain life a proper encouragement or a just recompense for the laborious achievements of true virtue? are these weapons sufficient to fortify men, or these discourses able to animate them in resisting the temptations which avert from virtue, or avoiding the enchantments which allure to vice? Will men, I say, readily, for the sake of an imaginary or insensible thing (a goodly name only, for all they see), which representeth no more of benefit attending it, cross the bent of their natural inclinations, forfeit their present ease, reject certain fruitions of pleasure, waive occasions of getting themselves profit, honour, and power, goods so manifestly substantial and grate-

ful to nature? will they undergo contentedly the difficulties, encounter the dangers, sustain the pains, the disgraces, the losses commonly incident to virtue? No, surely; when it cometh to earnest trial, it will hardly seem reason or wisdom so to do. But the Christian doctrine, as it compriseth, and in an inferior order urgeth also, such grounds and arguments, so it doth exhibit others far more solid and forcible: it commendeth goodness to us, not only as agreeable to man's imperfect and fallible reason, but as conformable to the perfect goodness of God, as the dictate of his infallible wisdom, as the resolution of his most holy will; as enjoined by his unquestionable authority, as our indispensable duty, and only way to happiness: the principles, from which it willeth us to act, are love, reverence, and gratitude to God, hearty good-will toward men, and a sober regard to our own true welfare; the ends which it prescribeth are God's honour, public edification, and the salvation of our own souls: it stirreth us to good practice, by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble the Supreme Goodness, shall express our gratitude toward that great Benefactor, unto whom we owe all that we have; shall discharge our duty, pay due honour, perform faithful service to our Almighty Lord and King; that we shall thereby surely decline the wrath and displeasure of God, shall surely obtain his favour and mercy, with all sorts of blessings needful or profitable for us; that we shall not only avoid regrets and terrors of conscience here, but escape endless miseries and torments; we shall not only procure present comfort and peace of mind, but shall acquire crowns of everlasting glory and bliss. These surely are the truest and firmest grounds upon which a right estimation of virtue can subsist; these are motives incomparably most effectual to the embracing thereof; these are the purest fountains whence it can spring, the noblest marks whither it can aim; a virtue so grounded, so reared, is certainly most sound and genuine, most firm and stable, most infinitely beneficial. But further,

7. It is a peculiar advantage of Christianity (which no other law or doctrine so much as pretendeth to,) that it not only clearly teacheth us and strongly persuadeth us to so excellent a way of life, but provideth also sufficient help and ability to practise it; without which (such is the frailty of our nature, as experience proveth, that) all instruction, all exhortation, all encouragement, would avail little. Other laws, for want of this, are in effect *ministries of condemnation*, racks of conscience, parents of guilt and of regret; reading hard lessons, but not assisting to do after them; imposing heavy burdens, but not enabling to bear them: our law is not such; it is not *a dead letter*, but hath a *quickening spirit* accompanying it;* it not only soundeth through the ear, but stampeth itself upon the heart of him that sincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it a sure guide to all good, and a safe guard from all evil: if our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth us to a faithful oracle, where we may receive counsel and information: if our passions are unruly, if our appetites are outrageous, if temptations be violent, and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to a full magazine, whence we may furnish ourselves with all manner of arms to withstand and subdue them: if our condition, in respect to all other means, be disconsolate or desperate, it sendeth us to a place, where we shall not fail of refreshment and relief; it offereth, upon our earnest seeking and asking, the wisdom and strength of God himself for our direction, our aid, our support and comfort, in all exigencies. To them, who with due fervency and constancy *ask it*, God hath in the gospel promised to *grant his holy Spirit*,[f] to guide them in their ways, to admonish them of their duty, to strengthen them in obedience, to guard them from surprises and assaults of temptation, to sustain them, and cheer them in afflictions. This advantage, as it is proper to our religion, so it is exceedingly considerable; for what would the most perfect rule or way signify, without as well a power to observe it, as a light to discern it? and how can man (so ignorant, so impotent, so inconstant a creature; so easily deluded by false appearances, and transported with disorderly

* 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9; Rom. v. 20; Aug. de Spir. et Lit. Τοῖς εὖ βιοῦν ἐπιχειρημένοις ἰσχὺν πρὸς τὴν γοικὴν σωτηρίαν ἐμπνεῖ.—Clem. Alex. Strom. vi. p. 523.

[f] Luke xi. 13.

passions; so easily shaken and unsettled by any small assault), either alone without some guidance perceive, or by himself without some assistance prosecute, what is good for him, especially in cases of intricacy and difficulty? how should he who hath frequent experience of his own weakness, not be utterly disheartened and cast into despair either of standing fast in a good state, or of recovering himself from a bad one; of rescuing himself from any vicious inclination, or attaining any virtuous habit, if he did not apprehend such a friendly power vigilantly guarding him, ready upon all occasions to succour and abet him? This consideration it is, which only can nourish our hope, can excite our courage, can quicken and support our endeavour in religious practice, by assuring us that there is no duty so hard, which by the grace vouchsafed us we may not achieve; that there is no enemy so mighty, which by the help afforded us we cannot master; so that, although we find ourselves *able to do nothing of ourselves*, yet *we can do all things by Christ that strengtheneth us.*[g]

8. Another peculiar excellency of our religion is this, that it alone can appease and satisfy a man's conscience, breeding therein a well-grounded hope, and a solid comfort; healing the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict: *There is no man*, as king Solomon said, and all men know, *who sinneth not;*[h] who doth not find himself in thought, word, and deed, frequently thwarting the dictates of reason, violating the laws of piety and justice, transgressing the bounds of sobriety; who consequently doth not in his own judgment condemn himself of disorder, and of offence committed against the world's great Lawgiver and Governor, the just patron of right and goodness; who thence doth not deem himself obnoxious to God's wrath, and is not fearful of deserved punishment from him: which fear must needs be fostered and augmented by considering, that as past facts are irrevocable, so guilt is indelible, and punishment, except by the voluntary remission of him that is offended, inevitable;* as also that there are no visible means of removing or abating such guilt by any reparation or amends that he can make, who is more apt to accumulate new offences, than able to compensate for what he hath committed. Now in such a case, some man indeed may frame to himself hopes of mercy;[i] may from the experience of God's forbearance to punish, and continuance of his bounty to sinners, presume that God is placable, and will not be rigorous in his proceedings with him; may hopefully guess, that in favour God will admit his endeavours at repentance, will accept the compensations he offereth in lieu of his duty, may suffer his guilt to be atoned by the sacrifices he presenteth: yet can no man upon such presumptions ground a full confidence that he shall find mercy; he cannot however be satisfied upon what terms mercy will be granted, in what manner it shall be dispensed, or how far it shall extend; God never having exhibited any express declarations or promises to those purposes: no man, therefore, can otherwise than suspect himself to be in a bad state, or esteem himself secure from the pursuits of justice and wrath; as he knoweth that *sin lieth at the door*,[j] so he cannot know but that vengeance may lie near it. Hence common reason, as well as the Jewish law, is a *ministry of death*, and *a killing letter*,[k] carrying nothing in the looks or language thereof, but death and ruin; hence is a man (if at least he be not besotted into a careless stupidity) shut up in an irksome bondage of spirit, under the grievous tyranny, if not of utter despair, yet of restless suspicion about his condition;[l] which as it quencheth in his mind all steady peace and joy, so it dampeth his courage and alacrity, it enervateth his care and industry to do well, he doubting what success and what acceptance his undertakings may find; it also cooleth in him good affections towards God, whom that he hath offendeth he knoweth, and questioneth whether he can be able to reconcile.

From this unhappy plight our religion thoroughly doth rescue us, assuring us, that God Almighty is not only reconcila-

[g] Phil. iv. 13.
[h] 2 Chron. vi. 36; Eccles. vii. 20.

* Pœna potest demi, culpa perennis erit.—*Ovid.*

[i] Wisd. xii. 19.
[j] Gen. iv. 7.
[k] 2 Cor. iii. 6.
[l] Rom. viii. 15.

ble, but desirous, upon good terms, to become our friend, himself most frankly proposing overtures of grace, and soliciting us to close with them; it upon our compliance tendereth, under God's own hand and seal, a full discharge of all guilts and debts, however contracted; it receiveth a man into perfect favour and friendship, if he doth not himself wilfully reject them, or resolve to continue at distance, in estrangement and enmity toward God. It proclaimeth, that if we be careful to amend, God will not be *extreme to mark what we do amiss*;[m] that iniquity, if we do not incorrigibly affect and cherish it, *shall not be our ruin*;[n] that although by our infirmity we fall often, yet by our repentance we may rise again, and by our sincerity shall stand upright; that our endeavours to serve and please God (although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere) will be accepted by him: this is the tenor of that great covenant between heaven and earth, which the Son of God did procure by his intercession, did purchase by his merits of wonderful obedience and patience, did ratify and seal by his blood; did publish to mankind, did confirm by miraculous works, did solemnize by holy institutions, doth by the evangelical ministry continually recommend to all men; so that we can nowise doubt of its full accomplishment on God's part, if we be not deficient on ours; so to our inestimable benefit and unspeakable comfort doth our religion ease their conscience, and encourage them in the practice of their duty, who do sincerely embrace it, and firmly adhere thereto.

9. The last advantage which I shall mention of this doctrine is this, that it propoundeth and asserteth itself in a manner very convincing and satisfactory: it propoundeth itself in a style and garb of speech, as accommodate to the general capacity of its hearers, so proper to the authority which it claimeth, becoming the majesty and sincerity of divine truth; it expresseth itself plainly and simply, without any affectation or artifice, without ostentation of wit or eloquence, such as men study to insinuate and impress their devices by:* it also speaketh with an imperious and awful confidence, such as argueth the speaker satisfied both of his own wisdom and authority; that he doubteth not of what he saith himself, that he knoweth his hearers obliged to believe him:† its words are not like the words of a wise man, who is wary and careful that he slip not into mistake (interposing therefore now and then his may-be's and perchances), nor like the words of a learned scribe, grounded on semblances of reason, and backed with testimonies; nor as the words of a crafty sophister, who by long circuits, subtile fetches, and sly trains of discourse, doth inveigle men to his opinion; but like the words of a king, carrying with them authority and power uncontrollable, commanding forthwith attention, assent, and obedience;[o] this you are to believe, this you are to do, upon pain of our high displeasure, at your utmost peril be it; your life, your salvation, dependeth thereon:‡ such is the style and tenor thereof, plainly such as becometh the sovereign Lord of all to use, when he shall please to proclaim his mind and will unto us. It freeth us from laborious and anxious inquiries, from endless disputes and janglings, from urging ineffectual arguments, and answering cross difficulties, &c. It doth also assert itself and approve its truth to the reason of man the most advantageously that can be; with proofs most suitable to itself, and in themselves most effectual; waiving those inferior methods of subtile argumentation and plausible language with which men are wont to confirm or set off their conceits; which how weak they are, how unfit to maintain truth, their unsuccess-

[m] Psal. cxxx. 3, 4. [n] Ezek. xviii. 30.

* 1 Cor. i. 17; ii. 2.—Ἁπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφυ.—*Eurip.*—*Vide* Orig. in Cels. lib. 6; Lact. iii. 1; Matt. vii. 29.

† Οὐ γὰρ κτύπον ῥημάτων, οὐδὲ λέξεως κόμπον, οὐδὲ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων κόσμον καὶ συνθήκην ὀψόμεθα περιττὴν καὶ ἀνδηρὸν (πόρρω γὰρ ταῦτα τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἁπάσης) ἀλλὰ ἰσχὺν ἄμαχον καὶ θείαν, καὶ δογμάτων ὀρθῶν ἀμήχανον δύναμιν, καὶ μυρίων χορηγίαν ἀγαθῶν.—Chrys. Proœm. in Joh.

‡ Quæ quidem tradita sunt breviter, ac nude; nec enim decebat alter, ut cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis assereret suas voces, tanquam fides ei non haberetur, sed ut oportuit est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maximus judex, cujus non est argumentari, sed pronunciare verum.—*Lact.* iii. 1.

* Eccles. viii. 4.

fulness doth evince; seeing by those means scarce any man hath been able thoroughly either to settle himself in or to draw others to a full persuasion concerning any important truth, discosted from sense.* Such methods, therefore, the Christian doctrine hath waived (or rather slighted, as beneath itself), applying arguments to the demonstration of its truth, far more potent, more sublime, and indeed truly divine: beside its intrinsic worth, or the excellency shining in itself (which speaketh it worthy of God, and goeth more than half way in proving it to proceed from him), there is no kind of attestation needful or proper, which God hath not afforded thereto. God is in himself invisible and undiscernible to any sense of ours, neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence; it must be therefore by effects of his incommunicable power, by works extraordinary and supernatural (such as no creature can perform or counterfeit), that he must, if ever, convincingly signify his purpose or pleasure to us; and such innumerable hath God vouchsafed to yield in favour and countenance of our religion; by clearly predicting and presignifying the future revelation of this doctrine by express voices and manifest apparitions from heaven, by suspending and thwarting the course of natural causes in many ways and instances, by miracles of providence no less remarkable than those of nature, by internal attestations to the minds and consciences of men; things too great slightly to be passed over, and the particular mention of which I must therefore now omit: by such wonderful means, I say, hath God taken care to convince us that our religion came from him, which is a peculiar advantage that it hath, such as no other institution (except that of the Jews) which was a prelude thereto, and whose truth serveth to confirm it) can reasonably pretend unto; and a great perfection it is thereof, since as it is no small content to a traveller, by a direction which he can fully confide in, to know that he is in the right way to his journey's end; so it cannot but prove an exceeding satisfaction and encouragement to us to be assured, by infallible testimony of God himself, that our religion is the true and direct way unto eternal happiness.

These considerations may, I conceive, be sufficient, as to vindicate our religion from all aspersions cast upon it either by inconsiderate and injudicious, or by vain and dissolute persons; so to confirm us all in the esteem, and incite us to the practice thereof; which use of them God in his mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all praise. *Amen.*

Now *the God of grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus—make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*[p] Amen.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.[q]

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVII.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.—*Proving that this is the very Christ.*

As for the name of *Messias*, their is evident reason why it should not be openly expressed in the ancient predictions;* it being an easy thing for any persons, out of imposture or wantonness, to have assumed that name; and consequently it would not have suited so well the true person. It was therefore more expedient, that his name should rather only be covertly signified or intimated; it was sufficient that a name should be imposed on him well agreeing to his office and chief performances. There be indeed several

* Legant nostra—quam excellenter quam divine, non tanquam ex philosophorum concertationibus strepere, sed tanquam ex oraculis et Dei nubibus intonare.—*Aug. de Civ. Dei*, ii. 19.

* But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ.—*Euseb. Hist.* i. 3.

p 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.

q 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.

names attributed to the Messias: *They shall call his name Emanuel*, said Isaiah; *This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness* (*Jehovah tsidkenu;*) and, *His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*, said Isaiah again;[a] but it is apparent, that these were not intended to be so much his proper names, as atributes or epithets congruous unto him in regard to the eminency of his person and performances.

The prophet Zechariah seemeth also (insisting in the footsteps of Isaiah and Jeremiah) to assign him the name Netser (or the Branch;) *Behold the man whose name is The Branch:* but this only denoted an appellation suiting him as derived from the stock of David, and might beside mystically allude to some circumstance concerning him.[b] It doth not therefore appear, that the one proper name, by which the Messias, as the Son of man, should be known and called, is directly forementioned; yet it is reasonable to suppose that God would have an especial care that he should have one befitting him. It was one of the seven things which the Talmudists say were constituted before the world: the *law*, *repentance*, *paradise*, *hell*, the *throne of glory*, the *sanctuary*, the *name of the Messias;* according to that in the seventy-second Psalm, ver. 17, *Ante solem primum nomen ejus;* so it seems they read it: the LXX. have it, πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου διαμενεῖ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

It was anciently a method of Divine Providence to impose upon persons (destinated by God to be especial subjects of his favour and eminent ministers of his glory) names answerable to the nature of their employment, or to the design which was by their means and ministry to be accomplished. Whereby as God's care and providence over human affairs was declared, so men upon the mention of such names were admonished to consider the divine benefits, and the duties correspondent to them. The particular reason of imposing such names is sometime expressly set down; as in the case of Seth, Abraham, Israel, Solomon; sometime it seems tacitly implied, the actions of the persons interpreting the reason of their names, as in Melchizedek, Joshua, Malachi, and perhaps in many others.[c]

This method with great reason we may suppose that the same divine wisdom would use in assigning a name to that person, whom from the beginning of things he had promised, and before the foundation of the world had assigned to sanctify and send into the world, for achieving the most high and excellent design that ever, for the glory of God and the good of his creation, was to be undertaken in this world.[d] Most fit it would be, that God himself should be his godfather; that he should have no ordinary, no casual, no insignificant name; but such an one, which being heard might instruct and admonish us, might raise in us a sense of God's infinite mercy and bounty toward us; might breed love in our hearts, and impress veneration on our minds toward him who should bear that auspicious and comfortable name; that name, which as the spouse of the mystical Solomon in her mystical song, did sing, is *as an ointment poured forth*,[e] full of most wholesome and most pleasant fragrancy.

Now since of all the Messias's performances none was to be more signal than that of saving; to publish, to purchase, to effect salvation, were to be (according to what the prophets expressly and frequently say) his peculiar works; to be the Saviour of the world was (as we before touched, according to the common opinion of the Jews) a proper attribute of his.[f]

Wherefore the name Jesus (which we are told in the Gospel was by direction from God imparted by particular revelation, brought by an archangel from heaven, imposed on our Lord) did very well suit the Messias. No other name could be more sweet or acceptable; no other name could better become him who was to redeem men from all their enemies,

[a] Isa. vii. 14; Jer. xxiii. 6; Isa. ix. 6.

[b] Zech. vi. 12; iii. 8; Isa. iv. 2; xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15; Matt. ii. 23.

[c] Gen. iv. 25; xvii. 5; xxxii. 28; 1 Chron. xxii. 9; Gen. xiii. 18; Heb. vii. 1.

[d] John x. 36.

[e] Cant. i. 3.

[f] Isa. xxv. 9; xxxv. 4; xlix. 8, 26; lxiii. 1; lv. 5; lii. 7, 10; lxi. 10; lix. 16; Hos. i. 7; Zech. ix. 9; John iv. 42.

their slaveries, their errors, their sins, their miseries.[g]

It was indeed a name not in its immediate application altogether new, for many others had borne it: Jesus, the son of Justus, we have mentioned in St. Paul;[h] Jesus the son of Sirach, that excellent writer, we know; and divers others so named occur in Josephus: yet was it questionless by God's providence, or by Moses by divine instinct, first produced with relation to the Messias: *Moses called Oshea the son of Nun, Jehoshua*, saith the text:[i] being in a mysterious exchange from a former name assigned to the famous Jesus (as not only Bensirach, but the apostles to the Hebrews writes him) the son of Nun, who of all the ancient types did most exactly (in office and performance) represent and presignify the Messias; being, as Bensirach speaks, *great for the saving of God's elect;*[j] whose actions are wonderfully congruous to those which we attribute to our Jesus. For, by the way, to show the resemblance (omitting less and more nice congruities), as Joshua did bring the good report, and evangelized concerning the promised land, (when other false or faint inquirers defamed it, and discouraged the people from entering;[k]) as he was educated under Moses, and served him faithfully; as he succeeded in the administration and government of God's people, perfecting what Moses had begun of deliverance and settlement to them; as he brought the Israelites (not that old disbelieving, mutinous, and repining generation, but a new progeny of better disposed people) finally out of the wilderness into Canaan, by God's miraculous assistance, subduing their enemies, and establishing them in a quiet possession of the promised land, allotting unto each tribe its inheritance;[l] and as he did re-circumcise the children of Israel: so did our heavenly Jesus first make a true and faithful discovery concerning the mystical land of promise (that better country) flowing with spiritual milk and honey (abundant with all spiritual comforts and pleasures, for the food, sustenance, and refreshment of our souls.[m]) He was born under the Law, and submitted to its injunctions, fulfilling all righteousnes.[n] He survived it (the part of it which was purely Mosaical and arbitrary), and did complete it. He doth conduct God's regenerate people (such as believe, and willingly follow him) out of the desert state of error, guilt, and sin, into the superior state of happy rest and joy, with miraculous power and efficacy; vanquishing all the spiritual Amorites (the *devil*, *world*, and *flesh*) which infest, obstruct, and oppose them; settling them in a perpetual, undisturbed, and immoveable enjoyment of that blissful religion; having also by a spiritual circumcision prepared and consecrated them to God. Our Saviour, therefore, not only when he at last in fulness of truth did come into the world, but anciently in type and shadow, may be supposed to have received this name Jesus, conferred upon him in the person of Joshua, his most illustrious representative. It certainly was most apposite to the Messias.

That Jesus (that person, whose birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension hence, are related in the evangelical histories) is *the Christ*, is the principal article of pure faith; the most peculiar doctrine of our religion as such, and as distinct from all other religions: it indeed virtually comprehends all other doctrines of moment therein, regarding either faith or practice. For that our being persuaded that *Jesus is the Christ*, implies, that we apprehend ourselves obliged to embrace for truth whatever was taught by him and his apostles, to obey all his laws, to rely upon him for attainment of all the mercies, and blessings, and rewards, which he promised to dispense, in that order and upon those terms which the gospel declareth. Whence to the hearty belief of this point such great commendations are given, so high rewards are offered, so excellent privileges are annexed in the scriptures. Whence also the declaring, proving, and persuading this doctrine, was the chief matter of the apostles' preaching, as both their profession and practice do show. *The Jews*

[g] Matt. i. 21; Luke i. 32; ii. 21.
[h] Col. iv. 11.
[i] Basil. Iren. &c.; Num. xiii. 16.
[j] Ecclus. xlvi. 1; Heb. iv. 8.
[k] Num. xiv. 7.
[l] Josh. v. 2.
[m] Heb. xi.
[n] Gal. iv. 4; Matt. iii. 15; v. 17, Ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς. σωτηρίας, πίστεως.

(saith St. Paul to the Corinthians) *require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ, that was crucified.* And, *I determined* (saith he again of himself) *not to know any thing among you* (that is, not to dicover any other knowledge, not to insist on any other subject), *save Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified.**[o] This, St. John tells us, was the drift of his writing the gospel (which is a more extensive and durable way of preaching.) *These things* (saith he) *were written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ.*[p] And their practice, suitable to such professions, is apparent in divers passages of this book, wherein their acts and their discourses are reported. This text particularly represents the scope to which St. Paul mainly directed his preaching, which was the maintenance and persuasion of this point, that *Jesus is the Christ.*

It is therefore very requisite, that we should well understand the meaning thereof, and that we should firmly be persuaded of its truth. To which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's assistance, to imitate St. Paul's practice here, who did συμβιβάζειν (that is the Greek word here, signifying primarily to put or bring things together, and thence in a way of collection or argumentation to teach), who, I say, did instruct his auditors, collecting it from testimonies of ancient scripture, and confirming it by arguments grounded thereon. In performing which, I shall observe this method:

1. I shall explain the notion and reason of this name, or title, *Christ.*

2. I shall show (that which is here tacitly supposed) that there was by God's appointment to be, or to come into the world from God, one person, signally that, which this name or title imports, ὁ Χριστὸς, *the very Christ.*

3. I shall argue that *Jesus* was that person.

4. I shall explain in what manner, in what respects, to what purposes, *Jesus*, in the New Testament, is represented as *Christ.*

5. I shall make some practical application of the point.

I. For the first particular. Christ is a name, or, title, importing office and dignity;[q] being the same with Messias, that in Greek, this in Hebrew, signifying, the Anointed; the which appellation we find attributed to several persons upon the following ground: Of ancient times, in the eastern countries (abounding, as with good oil, so with many delicate odoriferous spices), it seems generally to have been the manner (as from Hazael the Syrian his being anointed may probably be collected,[r]) it was, however, such among the Jews, to separate or consecrate persons, and things also I might add, designed to any great or extraordinary employment, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients; they symbolizing, or denoting thereby, as it seems, both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts and faculties qualifying them for such services; and also a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them (from the use of things, the performances of persons thus sanctified.) *Thy name* (saith the spouse in the Canticles) *is an ointment poured forth;*[s] that is, thy name is very delightful, very acceptable. And, *Behold* (saith David, commending brotherly love and concord) *how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard;*[t] so good and pleasant were those employments hoped to be, to which men were by such unction inaugurated. We find especially three sorts of persons, to whom this consecration did, by divine appointment, belong; kings, priests, and prophets; persons by whose ministry God of old did manage his intercourse with men, in governing them and communicating his blessings to them, both in an ordinary way (so he used kings and priests) and in an extraordinary manner, therein he employed prophets; which sorts of persons are therefore styled God's anointed; kings and priests more frequently, but sometimes also prophets; as in that of the Psalm; *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm;*[u] where

* καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον.
[o] 1 Cor. i. 23; ii. 2.
[p] John xx. 31.
[q] John i. 21; iv. 25.
[r] 1 Kings xix. 15.
[s] Cant. i. 2.
[t] Psal. cxxxiii. 1, 2.
[u] Psal. cv. 15; 1 Chron. xvi. 22.

prophets and the anointed of God do seem to denote the same thing, and one to expound the other: however, they belong to the same persons; for Abraham, whom together with the other patriarchs those words concern, is expressly called a prophet. (*Now therefore*, saith the text, *restore that man his wife: for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.*[v]) And that Isaac was a prophet, the apostle to the Hebrews intimates, saying, *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*[w] The same is plain of Jacob, who before his death uttered many great and remarkable predictions. The patriarchs, therefore, probably as prophets, were styled *God's anointed.* But to remark somewhat of these great offices, and their anointing singly:

For priests, although at first all the sons of Aaron were thus consecrated, according to that law in Exodus, *Thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office;* yet the Jewish masters tell us, that afterward in all the course of times only the high-priest was so consecrated.[x] Whence by the anointed, or the priest that is anointed, is, say they, meant the high-priest, in distinction from other inferior priests.

For kings, the Jewish doctors also (as master Selden reports) do tell us, that such of them, who in a legal, orderly, and unquestioned course of right did succeed into the kingdom, were not themselves in person anointed (they being conceived to derive a sufficient consecration from their ancestors;*) but all those, who in an extraordinary way by special designation (as Saul, David, Jehu, Hazael), or upon a doubtful and controverted or opposed title (as Solomon and Joas), did assume the royal charge, were thus initiated:[y] (how ancient also the custom of anointing princes was, may be seen from that expression in Jotham's parable: *The trees went forth to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, Reign thou over us.*[z])

As for prophets, we do find that they were commonly, or according to ordinary rule, anointed; but one plain instance we have of Elisha, substituted to Elijah (the chief of prophets in his time), in this manner: *Elisha* (it is said by God) *the son of Shaphat, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room;*[a] who was thus consecrated, probably, because he was to be a prophet more than ordinary, endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater actions, than common prophets were then; or perhaps because he was to be the archprophet, or head of the prophets at that time.

We may also further observe, that some persons, who (in probability) did not partake any material unction, but were yet destinated by God, and qualified and employed as special instruments of his providence or grace, for producing effects suitable to any of those offices, have been therefore styled *God's anointed.*[b] Upon which score the patriarch's (by whom God's true religion was maintained and conveyed) do seem to have been called God's anointed.) And king Cyrus (whose ministry God used in the re-edifying his temple and refreshing his people) is therefore termed God's Christ, or anointed:[c] (*Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus my Christ;* τῷ Χριστῷ μου Κύρῳ.) the name of the sign being imparted to persons who were endued with the qualities, or did perform the effects signified thereby.

These things being considered, it appeareth that the name *Christ* doth import a person in a special and signal manner designed and ordained by God to one, or some, or all of these charges and functions; an extraordinary king, or a great priest, or an eminent prophet; or one, in whom either more or all of these did concur. So much may suffice for the notion and reason of this title, *Christ.*

II. Now that there was a Person supereminently endued with all these characters (a *Christ* in all these respects), decreed by God in due time to come into the world for accomplishment of the greatest purposes answerable to that title

* οὓς καὶ αὐτοὺς νεύματι θείῳ Προφήτατι χρίοντες εἰκονικούς τινας Χριστοὺς ἀπειργάζοντο. — Euseb. Hist. i. 3.

[v] Gen. xx. 7. [w] Heb. xi. 20.

[x] Exod. xxx. 30; xl. 15; Χριστοιέρεῖς. Mac. ii. 1, 10; Selden de Succ. ii. 9; Levit. iv. 3, 5, 16; vi. 22.

[y] 2 Kings ix. 3; xi. 12; 1 Kings xix. 15; i. 39.

[z] Judges ix. 8. [a] 1 Kings xix. 16.

[b] 1 Chron. xvi. 22. [c] Isa. xlv. 1; xliv. 28.

(for the instruction and reformation of the world, for the erecting and managing an universal and perpetual kingdom, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, for the reduction of all nations to the acknowledgment of God, and obedience to his will, and hope in his mercy), many express passages in the ancient scripture declare.

That such a prophet should be sent, Moses in express terms foretold: *The Lord thy God* (saith he) *shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken:* and *I will* (saith God himself) *raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him,*[d] &c.; which words plainly describe a very extraordinary prophet sometime to come, who was (signally and especially, beyond all other prophets) to resemble Moses; who consequently was to accomplish high designs, and to achieve wonderful acts; to conduct and deliver God's people, to reveal God's mind and will, to promulge a new law, and establish a new covenant; so his resembling Moses doth imply, so his mission doth signify (for why, if he were not intended for the performance of somewhat great and new, even beyond what Moses did, should he be designed so formally; what need or reason had there been of his mission after Moses? and so the later prophets do interpret the great Lawgiver's words: who largely predict concerning one, ordained by God to come, who should eminently discharge all parts of the prophetical function; who should disclose new truths to men, should proclaim a new law to the world, should *establish a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with all people;*[e] who should propagate the knowledge and worship of God, enlightening the Gentiles, and converting them unto God; who should instruct the ignorant, strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted; according to divers passages concerning him; as, for instance, that in Isaiah, cited by St. Luke: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted*[f]—and that in the same prophet alleged by St. Matthew: *Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles: he shall not cry,*[g] &c.; which being anointed to preach tidings and to bring forth judgment from God, being elected and inspired by God in order to such performances, are peculiar marks of a prophet; such promulgation of God's will, such ministration of direction and comfort from God, are the proper employment of a prophet; that is, of an especial agent sent and qualified by God to transact spiritual affairs with men, and to declare or denounce his pleasure to them.

The ancient scriptures do also plainly signify concerning the same person, that he should be a great Prince constituted by God to govern his people for ever in righteousness, peace, and prosperity;[h] endued with power requisite for delivering them from oppression and slavery;[i] for subduing their enemies, for reducing the nations under subjection unto God. So Isaiah: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice for ever.*[j] Jeremiah: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth: in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely.*[k] Ezekiel: *I will save my flock, they shall be no more a prey—and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.*[l] Daniel:

[d] Deut. xviii. 15, 18; John i. 46; Acts iii. 22; vii. 37.

[e] Jer. xxxi. 33; Isa. xlix. 8.

[f] Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18.

[g] Isa. xlii. 1; Matt. xii. 78.

[h] Acts ii. 36.

[i] Luke i. 71, 74.

[j] Isa. ix. 6; xi. 1, 10; xvi. 5.

[k] Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15; xxx. 8.

[l] Ezek. xxxiv. 22, &c.; xxxvi. 21, &c.; xxxvii. 24, &c.

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages shall serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.[m] Hosea: *The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.*[n] The Psalmist: *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion; ask of me, and I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*[o] In these and in many other places do the prophets speak (very perspicuously and magnificently) concerning the kingdom, royal state, and princely achievements of this great personage who should come.

That he also should assume and execute the priestly function may also be learned from prophetical instruction. For of him Zechariah thus spake: *Behold the man whose name is The Branch*[p] (a name which so often (in sense) is attributed to this Person, as sprouting from the stock of David;) *he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the Lord shall be between them both.* Of him also David spake: *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*[q] To *make reconciliation for iniquity* (which Daniel ascribes to him;) to *bear the sins of the people,* and to *make intercession for the transgressors*[r] (which are assigned to him by Isaiah;) are also performances, from which his sacerdotal office may be collected.[s]

These things being considered, it is no wonder that the ancient Jews (although the text of scripture doth seldom, perhaps not oftener than once (in the ninth of Daniel), explicitly and directly apply this name of Christ, or Messias, to this illustrious Person, so prophesied of and promised to come) did especially assign this title unto him;[t] it seeming of any most congruous and most comprehensive of what appertained to him; most apt to denote all the prerogatives, the endowments, the achievements, the effects, which should belong to him, or proceed from him. Whence it is observed by the learned, that the Chaldee Paraphrase (composed, as they say, before Jesus our Lord's time, by the priests, as an interpretation of the not so exactly understood Hebrew scripture, for edification and instruction of the people) doth very often apply unto him this name of the Messias: according to whose exposition and style, together with tradition continually deduced down from the prophets themselves (as is probable), we see plainly from the New Testament, and from other history conspiring therewith, that God's people unanimously did expect a person under this name and notion, who should be endued with qualities and should perform actions conformable to the characters mentioned, to come in determinate time into the world. Of Anna the prophetess it is said, that *she gave thanks likewise to the Lord, and spake of him* πᾶσι τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν, *to all that expected redemption in Jerusalem.*[u] Hence, when St. John the Baptist did live, and teach in a manner extraordinary, *the people did expect, and all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he were the Christ.*[v] Yea, *the Jews* (that is, their senate, or great sanhedrim) *sent priests and Levites to inquire of him, whether he were the Christ or no:*[w] and when Jesus's admirable discourses and works had convinced divers persons, they said, *When Christ comes, shall he do greater miracles than this man hath done?*[x] and the report which Philip made to Nathanael concerning Jesus was this: *We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write:*[y] so at large they did presume concerning *a Christ to come.*[z] That they particularly did con-

[m] Dan. vii. 13, 14; ii. 44, 45.
[n] Hos. iii. 5.
[o] Psal. ii. 6, 8; lxxii. 11, 17; xlv. 6; lxxix. 3, 27, 36; cxxxii. 17, 18.
[p] Zech. vi. 12.
[q] Psal. cx. 4.
[r] Dan. ix. 24.
[s] Isa. liii. 12.
[t] Psal. xlv. 7; Isa. lxi. 1.
[u] Luke ii. 38.
[v] Luke iii. 15.
[w] John i. 19,
[x] John vii. 31.
[y] John i. 45.
[z] John iv. 42.

ceive he should be a great prophet, who should abundantly declare God's truth and will, may be gathered from divers passages; as from that in St. John: *These men therefore seeing the miracle that Jesus had done, said, That this is in truth the prophet, who was to come into the world.*[a] Thus may that in St. Luke be taken: *And there came a fear upon all; and they glorified God, saying, That the great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people:*[b] and this the Samaritan woman implied, when she said, *I know that the Messias comes; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.*[c] That they supposed he should be a king, who should be furnished with mighty power, and should perform wonderful acts; who should assume the government of God's people with royal majesty, and execute it with glorious success, is most clear. It was no wonder to king Herod to hear the wise men's inquiry, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?*[d] Upon it he immediately demands of the Scribes *where Christ is to be born.* Hence no sooner did Nathanael believe in Christ, but he cries out, *Master, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.*[e] It was upon this supposition that the priests grounded their calumny: *We have found this man perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying, that he himself is Christ, the King;*[f] as also hence (upon information and by instinct from them) Pilate asked him that question, *Art thou the King of the Jews?* hence likewise proceeded that acclamation, *Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς, Blessed is the King, that is to come in the name of the Lord.*[g] And it was from this ancient popular prejudice, that the apostles asked Jesus after his resurrection, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*[h] It is indeed the ordinary title which the Talmudists and ancient Rabbins give the Messias, *Hammelech Messiah*, Messias the King.

That the Messias in their opinion was also to be a priest, is not so clearly apparent; yet it may probably be inferred: that they understood the 110th Psalm to respect the Messias is very likely, or rather certain, from that passage in the gospel, in which Jesus asked the Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?*[i] and they answering, *The Son of David*, he returned upon them this puzzling question: *How then doth David in the spirit* (that is, prophetically) *call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand?* which question confounded them, they not daring to deny that Psalm to respect the Messias (it being the received opinion among the doctors), nor yet seeing how the relations of *Son* and *Lord* were reconcilable: and admitting that Psalm was to be referred unto the Messias, they must consequently acknowledge him to be a priest; for it is there said, *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*[j] It was also an opinion passing among them, that the Messias should be the Saviour of the world, as may be collected from that saying of the Samaritans: *We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world:*[k] which being their opinion, and toward the salvation of men it being needful that a reconciliation of them unto God, and an expiation of their sins (which are sacerdotal acts), should be procured by him, it seems to follow, that they had some notion of his *priesthood.* Indeed the persuasion concerning a Messias to come, about the time when our Lord appeared, became diffused over the whole eastern parts; as even pagan historians (Tacitus and Suetonius) do report.* And the conceit thereof was so vigorous in the Jews, that it excited them to rebellion, and encouraged them with great obstinacy to persist therein, as not only those historians, but Josephus himself telleth us;† he also together with them (which is somewhat

[a] John vi. 14.
[b] Luke vii. 16.
[c] John iv. 25.
[d] Matt. ii. 2, 4.
[e] John i. 50.
[f] Luke xxiii. 3.
[g] Luke xix. 38.
[h] Acts i. 6.

* Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur.—*Suet. in Vesp.*

Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur.—*Tac. Hist.* v.

† Τὸ δὲ ἐπάραν αὐτοὺς μάλιστα πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἦν χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὑρημένος

[i] Matt. xxii. 43.
[j] Psal. cx. 4.
[k] John iv. 42; Luke ii. 38.

strange) referring the intent of those prophecies, and the verifying of that opinion, to the person of the emperor Vespasian. The same conceit did then likewise occasion many pretenders and impostors (such as Theudas, and Judas the Galilean) to arise, disposing also the people so easily to be deluded by them, and so readily to run after them, as they did to their own harm.

Thus according to the ancient scriptures, interpreted and backed by the current tradition and general consent of God's people, it is sufficiently apparent that a Messias (according to the notion premised) was to come into the world.

III. Now further, that Jesus, whom we acknowledge, was indeed that Messias, may appear plainly from the perfect correspondency of all circumstances belonging to the Messias's appearance, and of all characters suiting his person, and of all things to be performed by him; together with whatever was to be consequent upon his presence and performances; according to ancient presignifications and predictions, and according to the passable opinions of God's people concerning him; the which, as they cannot possibly suit with any other person that hath yet appeared, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter, so they exactly agree to the coming, and person, and practice, and success of Jesus.

Among circumstances the most considerable, is the time; the which (both when it was said that he should come, and when it was fit that he should come) did very well agree to Jesus. *But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son*, &c.[l] *Fulness* in regard to ancient prediction, in regard to fitness of season. For as the Messias was to be *the desire of all nations*, so Jesus did come then, when by special instinct a general expectation and desire of his coming was raised in the world; at the time when the patriarch Jacob foretold that *Shiloh would come*, viz. *when the sceptre was* just *departed from Judah, and a Lawgiver from his feet;*[m] Judæa being brought under the dominion of strangers; (such were the Romans, such was king Herod:) About the expiration of Daniel's weeks (however commenced or computed), *the time determined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy* (as the prophet speaks:[n]) Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to that of Daniel; *And after sixty and two weeks shall Messias be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary:*[o] When that *Zion, out of which* (as Isaiah tells us) *the law was to go forth, and out of which the Redeemer should come, and turn ungodliness from Jacob,*[p] did stand and flourish: When the temple did stand, which the prophets Malachi and Haggai did predict should be illustrated by the presence of the Messias; *the Lord, whom ye seek*, (saith Malachi), *shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, in whom ye delight:*[q] and, *I will* (saith Haggai) *shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord: the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts:*[r] Before Jewry was desolated, Jerusalem destroyed, the tribes and families of Israel confounded, all that people wofully dispersed, and in a palpable manner deserted by God: When the Jewish religion (which the Messias was to complete) was by a numerous accession of proselytes disseminated and diffused through many provinces of that one vast empire, under which a great part of the world was united and settled durably in a calm state of peace and order:[s] When one or two languages were commonly understood by all, and men thereby more easily conversed together; and when the ancient scriptures being translated into Greek were so widely intelligible: When mankind was become gene-

γράμμασιν, ὡς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας τις αὐτῶν ἄρξει τῆς οἰκουμένης.—ἐδήλου δ' ἅμα τὴν περὶ Οὐεσπασιανοῦ τὸ λόγιον ἡγεμονίαν, ἀποδειχθέντος ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίας αὐτοκράτορος.—Jos. ἀλώσ. vi. 31.

[l] Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10; Acts. xiv. 16; xvii. 30.

[m] Gen. xlix. 8.

[n] Dan. ix. 24.

[o] Dan. ix. 26.

[p] Isa. ii. 3; lix. 20.

[q] Mal. iii. 1.

[r] Hag. ii. 7, 9.

[s] Isa. ii 4; xi. 6; lxv. 25; lxvi. 12; Psal. lxxii. 7.

rally civilized and cultivated with laws, and policy and learning;[t] with knowledge of arts and philosophy; the world then beginning of itself to open its eyes, so as to discern the errors and deceits by which it long had been abused; and was thence well prepared to learn, and rendered very susceptive of divine truth: When all things thus conspired with good advantage to entertain the Christ, then *in the fulness of time*, in the right and *proper season* (καιροῖς ἰδίοις, as St. Paul speaketh) καιρῷ δεκτῷ, *in an acceptable time*, as Isaiah prophesied, did Jesus come, to instruct and reform the world, as he professed.[u] It was Porphyry's objection against Christianity, and an obvious one, why Christ did not come before, but in the latter days; to which the particular fitness of this time is an answer.

The other circumstances; the family out of which, the place where, the manner in which, Jesus was born, did also punctually correspond. He was to be an Israelite, according to the promise made of old to Abraham, that *in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;*[v] and according to Moses's prophecy, *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren.*[w] He was to come out of the tribe of Judah; as the patriarch Jacob in his last prophetical rapture did by various expressions intimate and signify.[x] Particularly he was to rise out of the family of David, as the prophets frequently and clearly did avouch; for he was, as Isaiah said, *to be a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch going out of his roots; a righteous Branch*, according to Jeremiah, *whom God would raise to David.*[y] *He* whom Solomon (that most wise, peaceable, and prosperous prince, who raised that glorious temple, the emblem of God's church) did presignify; and in whom the promises made to David concerning the perpetuity of his throne should be made good; *There shall not fail thee a man*, &c.—*Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever;* especially that absolute and irrevocable promise ratified by God's oath, *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne unto all generations:* who consequently, by reason of conjunction in blood, and mutual representation, David prefiguring him, and he by succession into the imperial right expressing David, is by several of the prophets (by Jeremiah, by Ezekiel, by Hosea) called David:[z] whence the learned among the Jews did consent, that the Messias was to be the Son of David: *How say the Scribes, that Christ is the Son of David?* and, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* (it is our Lord's question to the Pharisees;) *They say unto him, The Son of David.* Yea, the people were generally informed herein, and possessed with this sentiment: *Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David?* was a popular speech in St. John.[a] *And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?*[b] Now, accordingly, that Jesus came out of this country, tribe, and family (that he was, as St. Luke speaketh, *of the house and lineage of David*,[c] both according to natural and legal succession), the express affirmation of angels, the positive attestation of his parents and kindred (who best knew), the genealogies (according to the manner of those times and that nation) carefully preserved, and produced by the evangelists, do assure us;[d] neither doth it appear that Jesus's adversaries did ever contest this point, but seem by their silence to have granted it as easily and evidently proveable by authentic records and testimonies.

More precisely yet for the *place* of the Messias's birth, it was to be the town of Bethlehem; so the prophet Micah foretold; thus cited by St. Matthew: *Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah:*

[t] Dan. xii. 4.
[u] Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Isa. xlix. 8; 2 Cor. vi. 2.
[v] Gen. xxii. 18.
[w] Deut. xviii. 15.
[x] Gen. xlix. 7, &c.; Rev. v. 5; xxii. 16.
[y] Isa. xi. 1, 10; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15.
[z] 1 Kings viii. 25; 2 Sam. vii. 16; 2 Chron. vi. 16; Psal. lxxxix. 3; cxxxii. 11; Luke i. 32, 69; Acts ii. 30; Jer. xxxiii. 17, 21, 22, 26; xxx. 9; Hos. iii. 5; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; xxxvii. 24, 25.
[a] Mark xii. 35; Matt. xxii. 42; (xxi 9; xii. 23;) John vii. 42.
[b] Matt. xii. 23.
[c] Luke ii. 4.
[d] Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 32, 69.

for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.[e] So from thence did the learned judge; for being consulted by king Herod *where Christ was to be born*, they answered that *in Bethlehem*:[f] and so also did the people commonly believe, as appears by the foresaid passage in St. John, *Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?*[g] Now that Jesus should be there born, God himself took especial care, ordering it by his providence, that by imperial edict the world should be taxed, or registered; and that in order thereto the parents of Jesus should be forced to go from a distant place of their habitation unto Bethlehem, the place of their stock and family; that so both Jesus might be born there, and that good circumstance might appear certain by the unquestionable testimony of the censual tables, unto which (extant even in their times) Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and St. Chrysostom refer those who would be certified in that particular.*

That place also of his parents' abode in Nazareth of Galilee, upon which was consequent his first appearance in way of action, was so ordered as to answer ancient predictions; according to which it was said, that *in the land of Zabulon and Nephthali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in darkness did see a great light, and they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light shined.*[h]

The manner also of the Messiah's birth was, as became such a Person, to be very extraordinary, and different from the common generation of men: for he was not only to be *one like the Son of man*, as the prophet Daniel terms him, and indeed *the Son of David*, as all the prophecies declare of him, but the *Son of God* also;[i] for, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, saith God of him in the second Psalm.[j] And that which in the first less perfect sense was said of Solomon (who prefigured him), was, according to a more sublime meaning, and more exactly, to agree unto him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever: Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth:*[k] and accordingly we see that the Jews (both the wiser and the vulgar sort) did suppose that he should be *the Son of God;* so St. John the Baptist, so Nathanael, so Martha, so St. Peter, and the other apostles, when they became persuaded that Jesus was the Christ, did presently, according to anticipation of judgment common to them with the people, confess him to be *the Son of God;*[l] the high-priest himself intimated the same, when he asked Jesus, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* Yea, the devils themselves were learned and orthodox in this point; who cried out, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.*[m] Now that, according to those prophecies and those traditions, the Messias should be in a more than ordinary way, and (for the justifying of God's truth, together with the satisfying men) should evidently appear to be the Son of God, it was requisite (at least convenient) that his birth should be procured by divine operation, without concurrence of a human father (how otherwise, at least how better, could it be apparent that he was both the *Son of God* and *of man?*) It was consequently either necessary or fit that he should be born of a virgin:* and that he should indeed be so born the prophet Isaiah did signify, when he said, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign;*[n] (that is, shall perform somewhat very remarkable and strange: what was that?) *Behold, a vigin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel;*[o] which prophecy that it belonged to the Messias, appears from the report and

* Κώμη δὲ τίς ἐστιν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ Ἰουδαίων σταδίους λέ Ἱεροσολύμων, ἐν ᾗ ἐγενήθη Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, ὡς καὶ μαθεῖν δύνασθε ἐκ τῶν ἀναγραφῶν, &c —Just. Martyr. Apol. 2; Tertull. in Marc. iv. 19.

[e] Micah v. 2; Matt. ii. 6.

[f] Matt. ii. 5. [g] John vii. 42.

[h] Isa. ix. 1, 2; Matt. iv. 15.

[i] Dan. vii. 13. [j] Psal. ii. 7, 12.

* —— Εἰ μὲν σημεῖόν ἐστι τὸ διδόμενον, παράδοξος ἔστω καὶ ἡ γέννησις· εἰ δὲ κοινὸς ὁ τρόπος τῆς γεννήσεως τοῦ παιδίου, μήτε σημεῖον λεγέσθω.—Bas. in Isa. vii.

[k] 1 Chron. xxii. 10; 2 Sam. vii. 13; Psal. lxxxix. 27.

[l] John i. 34, 49; xi. 27; vi. 69; Matt. xvi. 16.

[m] Mark xiv. 61; Matt. xxvi. 63; viii. 29; Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34.

[n] Isa. vii. 14. [o] Matt. i. 23

description which follows in the continuation of this particular prophecy concerning this child: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful,*[p] &c. which description questionless appertaineth to the Messias. The same prophet signifies the same concerning him, when he introduceth him speaking thus: *And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant,*[q] &c. Now that Jesus, in correspondence to this admirable character, was born of a virgin, his parents (persons of unblameable integrity and innocence; so that even the adversaries of Jesus appear not ever to have offered to impeach them of imposture, or to have troubled them about this report coming from them) did constantly aver, angels did attest to their report, and God himself at several times by audible voices from heaven declared Jesus to be *his beloved Son.*

The state and condition also, in which the Messias was first to appear, was described to be a state of external meanness and obscurity, of poverty and wretchedness, in the eye of man; a state indeed most convenient and proper for a spiritual King, a most holy Priest, an absolute Prophet; who was to teach, exercise, and exemplify the most rough and harsh pieces of righteousness and piety (contempt of worldly vanities and pleasures; all sorts of self-denial and abstinence; the virtues of meekness, humility, and patience;) who was to manage and execute his great undertakings, not by natural or human force, but by a virtue supernatural and divine; whose power consequently would be more conspicuous in a state of visible meanness and impotency, than in a condition of wordly splendour and strength; that also which he was to merit from God, and to undergo for the sake of men, doth argue the same: that such the Messias's state was to be, there are divers mystical intimations in the ancient scripture; but the prophet Isaiah speaks it out most plainly: *He shall grow up* (says he, describing that state) *before the Lord like a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*[r] And again: *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.*[s]

Now that Jesus appeared thus in a poor, servile, and despicable condition, we need not for to prove; for as his followers avow it, so his adversaries are most ready to grant it;[t] in the haughtiness of their conceit taking it for an advantage against him, it proves a scandal to them. *Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary? said they; and they were offended at him.*[u] Hence was it, that, as the prophet foretold, *he was despised and rejected of men, and they esteemed him not.*[v] Thus all the circumstances of the Messias's coming were answered by those of Jesus.

Now concerning the qualities and endowments of the Messias, which constitute his personal character, they are, as was expedient, such as should dispose and fit him for the discharge of his great employment and duty with utmost advantage, and especial decency: in general, he was to be endued with supereminent piety and sanctity, with perfect innocence and integrity; so it is implied in all the descriptions of his person and performances: *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre: thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity; wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,*[w] said the Psalmist of him; and, *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins,*[x] said Isaiah of him (denoting the ready disposition of his mind to do whatever was good;) and, *He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips,*[y] saith the same prophet of him again. Some particular virtues and abilities are also ascribed to him in an eminent degree: excellent wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters, thus represented by Isaiah: *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding,*

[p] Isa. ix. 6.
[q] Isa. xlix. 5.
[r] Isa. liii. 2.
[s] Isa. xlix. 7.
[t] Phil. ii. 7; 2 Cor. viii. 9.
[u] Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3.
[v] Isa. liii. 3.
[w] Psal. xlv. 6, 7.
[x] Isa. xi. 5
[y] Isa. liii. 8.

the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.[z] Eloquence also, skill and aptitude to instruct men; which that most evangelical prophet thus sets forth: *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.*[a] That he should be meek, and gentle, and compassionate toward men, in regard to their infirmities and afflictions; mild and lowly in his conversation, the prophets also signify: *He shall* (said Isaiah) *feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young: A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench:*[b] and, *Behold* (saith Zechariah) *thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass.*[c] That he should be of a quiet and peaceable disposition, nowise fierce or contentious, turbulent or clamorous, Isaiah declares, thus saying of him (as St. Matthew cites him), *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.*[d] To his admirable patience in bearing afflictions and contumelies, Isaiah thus renders express testimony: *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*[e] And, *I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*[f] His invincible courage and resolution in God's service, together with his strong confidence in God and entire submission to God's will, is thus described by the same prophet: *The Lord God* (saith he) *will help me; therefore I shall not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.—The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.*[g] His general goodness and boundless charity toward men, the nature of his office and design, together with the whole course and tenor of his practice, such as they are represented, do suppose and imply.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did in his person fully correspond, and did by his practice thoroughly make good this moral high character, the story of his life with admirable simplicity and sincerity, without any semblance of disguise or artifice, represented by persons who most intimately were acquainted and long conversed with him (or by persons immediately informed by them), and with great constancy attested to and maintained by them, doth plainly show; wherein his incomparable piety toward God, his readiness to fulfil all righteousness, his entire submission and resignation of himself to God's will, the continual fervency (devotion of all kinds, prayer, thanksgiving, fasting, practised in the most intense degree and in the most reverent manner), his pure and ardent zeal for God's glory, his steadfast resolution, and indefatigable industry in God's service (making it his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to perform his work.[h])

Wherein an unspotted innocence, not only exempted from the vices and defilements, but raised above the vanities and impertinencies of the world; secured by a magnanimous contempt, or neglect and abstinence from all worldly grandeur and splendour; all secular wealth and profit, all bodily delight and ease, wherein an admirable wisdom and prudence, expressed in all his demeanour and his discourse; in his discerning the secret thoughts and dissembled intentions of men; in his declaring and defending truth, detecting and confuting errors; in baffling learned and wily opposers; in eluding captious questions, and evading treacherous designs; in not meddling with the secular affairs and interests of men; in not encumbering himself with the needless cares and occupations of this life, nor entangling himself in the snares of this world; in dexterously accommodating his behaviour and his speech

[z] Isa. xi. 2; liii. 11. [a] Isa. l. 4.
[b] Isa. xl. 11; xlii. 3; Matt. xii. 20.
[c] Zech. ix. 9; Matt. xxi. 5.
[d] Isa. xlii. 2; Matt. xii. 19. [e] Isa. liii. 7.
[f] Isa. l. 6. [g] Isa. l. 7, 5.

[h] Matt. iii. 15; Heb. x. 7; John xviii. 11; xii. 27; Matt. xxvi 39; xiv. 23; xix. 13; xxi. 22; xi. 25; ix. 14; Luke vi. 12; xxii. 32, 41, 42; xxiii. 34; John xvii. 1, 6, 11, 7; xi. 41; vi. 11; John iv. 31; vi. 31; viii. 29; v. 30; ix. 4; xv. 10; xvii. 4.

to the dispositions, the capacities, the needs of men; to the circumstances of things and exigencies of occasion, so as did best conduce to the promoting his great design and undertaking; so that the people, observing his proceedings, could not but be astonished, and ask, *Whence hath this man this wisdom?* so that they could not but acknowledge, *He hath done all things well.*[i]

Wherein, particularly, an excellent faculty of speaking and teaching, of interpreting and applying the holy scriptures, of proving and persuading God's truth, whereby he drew the people after him, converted many of them to amendment of life, convinced the most averse and incredulous; so that *all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and answers;* so that *all bare witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;* so that the officers sent to apprehend him did confess, *Never man spake like this man.*[j]

Wherein an invincible fortitude and gallantry, expressed in his most constant profession and undaunted maintenance of truth and goodness; in his encountering the prejudices, detecting the frauds, reproving the vices of the age, though upheld by the greatest persons and by prevalent factions; in his plain dealing and free speaking with all sincerity and all authority, in his zealous checking and chastising profane abuses; in his disregarding the rash and fond opinions of men, their spiteful obloquies, harsh censures, slanderous imputations, and unjust reproaches; in his foreseeing the greatest of dangers and worst of mischiefs that could arrive to man, yet cheerfully encountering and firmly sustaining them; sustaining all the violent oppositions and assaults which the most virulent malice and envy inflamed with superstition and blind zeal could set against him.

Wherein a most quiet and peaceful disposition, apparent from his never attempting any resistance or any revenge upon provocation of frequent great affronts and injuries; from his never raising any tumults, nor fomenting any quarrels, nor meddling with any litigious matters, nor encroaching upon any man's right or office;[k] by his ready compliance with received customs, by his paying tribute, although not due from him, to prevent offence; by his frequent instructions and exhortations to peace, to innocence, to patience, to due obedience, to performing due respect to superiors, and paying customs to governors; to the yielding a docile ear, and an observance to those who *sat in Moses's chair.*[l]

Wherein an exceeding meekness and gentleness, demonstrated in all his conversation; in resenting very moderately, or rather not resenting at all, most unjust hatreds, outrageous calumnies, bitter reproaches and contumelies from his adversaries; very perverse neglects and ingratitudes from multitudes of people; many infirmities, stupidities, distrusts, basenesses, and treacheries from his own nearest friends and followers: in his passing over and easily pardoning the greatest offences committed against him, yea sometime extenuating and excusing them: in the mildness of his censures, expostulations, and reproofs; in his tempering the fierce zeal, hard censure, and rigorous proceeding against persons unhappy, or faulty; in his tender pity of all persons in any want, distress, or trouble; in his earnest commiseration and bewailing the vengeance he foresaw impendent on his persecutors, and in his praying for their pardon.[m]

[i] Matt. viii. 20; 2 Cor. viii. 9; Luke ii. 40, 52; Matt. ix. 4; xii. 10, 25; xxii. 18; xvi. 1; xix. 3; xxii. 18, 35, 46; John viii. 6; Matt. xxi. 27; xxii. 18, 34; John vi. 1; viii. 6; x. 39; Luke xx. 3; xxii. 4; xxx. 12, 24; Matt. xii. 14; xix. 5; Mark viii. 30; Luke xii. 14; xiii. 2; xiv. 7, 12; xviii. 17; xix. 11; John vii. 6; xvi 4, 12; xi. 54; xvi. 27; iv. 10; Matt. xiii. 54; Mark. vii. 37.

[j] John xii. 42; vii. 15, 46; Matt. vii. 28; Luke ii. 47; iv. 42; John viii. 40; vii. 25, 26, 7; Luke xx. 46; xiii. 52; xvi. 15; Matt. xii. 14; xv. 13; xxiii. 19; xv. 6, 14; viii. 24; Luke xix. 45; John ii. 15; Luke ix. 22, 51; xviii. 32; xxii. 15; Matt. xvi. 21; xx. 17; Mark x. 33.

[k] Matt. xxvi. 52; Luke xii. 14.

[l] Matt. viii. 4; Luke xvii. 14; Matt. xvii. 27; ix. 23; x. 16; xxii. 21; xxiii. 2.

[m] Matt. xi. 29; ix. 4, 34; xii. 25; x. 25; xii. 24; John xv. 19; x. 32; Luke iv. 24; Matt. xxvi. 50; xii. 25; xiv 31; John vii. 12, 20; viii. 48; x. 20; Matt. xvii. 17; xxvi. 56; Luke xxii 46; xxiii. 34; xxii. 51; ix. 55; John viii. 7; Matt. ix. 36; xiv. 14; xv. 32; Luke vii. 13; ix. 41; xiii. 34; John xiii. 21; Luke xxiii. 34.

Wherein a marvellous humility and lowliness of mind, expressed by his not seeking honour or applause from men, but shunning and rejecting it; his not assuming to himself, but ascribing all to God, and referring all to his glory; by his making no ostentation of his miraculous power and high endowments, but, so far as would comport with the prosecution of his main purpose (the glory and service of God, the good and welfare of men), carefully suppressing and concealing them; in his without dissatisfaction or discouragement bearing scorn, and contempt, and obloquy; in his willing condescension to the meanest offices and employments; in his free and familiar conversation with all sorts of people, with the lowest and most despicable, with the worst and most odious, for their good; he not despising the poorest or vilest wretch, who seemed capable of receiving any benefit from him;[n] in his easiness to be entreated, and readiness to comply with the desires of any man imploring succour or relief from him; in his being ready, not only to oblige, but to be obliged and receive courtesies from any man; to answer the invitation of a Pharisee or of a Publican; to accept favourably the well-intended respect of a poor woman; in the softness and sweetness of his language to all men, particularly to his disciples; *Be of good courage, daughter; Son, be of good cheer; I say unto you, my friends; Little children, I am a little while with you.* Such was his style and conversation toward his inferiors.[o]

Wherein an unparalleled patience, in contentedly and cheerfully, through all the course of his life, undertaking and undergoing whatever by God's will and providence was imposed on him, how grievous and distasteful soever to human apprehension or sense;[p] the extremest penury, the hardest toil, the vilest disgraces, the most bitter pains and anguishes incident to body or mind, the most horrid and most sorrowful of deaths; all these aggravated by the conscience of his own clearest innocence, by the extreme ingratitude of those who misused him, by the sense of God's displeasure for the sin of man, by all the imbittering considerations which a most lively piety and tender charity suggested;[q] in submitting to all this most freely and most calmly, without any regret, any disturbance.

Wherein an unexpressible and unconceivable charity (*a charity indeed which surpasseth knowledge*,[r] as St. Paul speaketh), evidenced in the constant strain and tenor of his whole life, passing through all his designs, all his words, and all his actions: for, διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν (as St. Peter says in the Acts) he did nothing else but *go about doing good*, and benefitting men;[s] curing their diseases, relieving their wants, instructing their minds, reforming their manners, drawing them to God and goodness, disposing them to the attainment of everlasting bliss and salvation. It is love, we may observe, which was the soul that animated and actuated him in all things; which carried him with unwearied resolution and alacrity through all the cruel hardships and toils, through all the dismal crosses and ignominies he endured: his life was in effect but one continual expression of charity (differently exerting itself according to various opportunities, and circumstances, and needs of men), the which was consummated and sealed by his death; the highest instance of charity that could be; for, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.*[t]

Wherein, finally (in which life, I say, of Jesus), all holiness, all virtue, all goodness (suitable to him, who was to be not only the teacher and the persuader of the best life, but a living standard and pattern thereon; who was to merit of God in man's behalf, to conciliate God's favour towards us, and appease his anger against us) do shine and sparkle with a beauty and a lustre transcending all expression. All which particulars might, were it now proper and seasonable, be

[n] John v. 41; viii. 50, 54; vi. 15; viii. 28; xi. 4; xvii. 4; Luke vii. 16, 29; ix. 43; viii. 56, 39, xvii. 18; xviii. 43; Matt. viii. 4; ix. 30; xii. 16; xix. 17; Mark v. 43; viii. 23; Matt. ix. 24; John xiii. 4; Matt. ix. 10; viii. 3, 19; Luke v. 29; xv. 2; xix. 5; vii. 36; xi. 37; John xii. 7.

[o] Matt. xxvi. 10; ix. 2, 22; Luke xii. 4; John xv. 14 [p] xiii. 33.

[p] John xviii. 11; xii. 27; Matt. xxvi. 39; viii. 20.

[q] (2 Cor. viii. 9.)

[r] Eph. iii. 19.

[s] Acts x. 38; Matt. iv. 23; ix. 35.

[t] John xv. 13.

thoroughly declared by instances extant in the evangelical history. So that the characteristical qualities of the Messias do clearly and abundantly agree to Jesus our Lord.

His performances should next be considered and compared; but the time doth not admit that we should now proceed any further.

Now, *blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*[a] Amen.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVIII.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.—*But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ.*

IN conformity to St. Paul's design and practice implied here, I have formerly propounded to explain and persuade these particulars:—1. What is the right notion and reason of this name or title, *Christ.* 2 That there was destinated to come into the world a Person, who signally, according to that right notion, should be *the Christ.* 3. That Jesus, whom we avow, is that Person, *the very Christ.* 4. In what manner, and upon what accounts, the New Testament representeth Jesus to be *the Christ.* 5. What application the point requireth.

In prosecution of which particulars, having despatched the first and second, I did enter into the third, which is of highest consequence, beginning to declare that Jesus, our Lord, is *the Christ*, from the circumstances of his coming into the world, and from his personal qualifications; which having in some measure performed, I shall now proceed to declare the same from the exact correspondency of his undertakings and performances, to those which, according to ancient presignifications and prophecies, the Messias was designed to undertake and accomplish; together with the consequences of what the Messias was to do, and what answerably Jesus did effect.

1. One great performance of the Messias was, by inspiration and in the name of God, to make a complete discovery of divine truth; to publish a law of universal and perpetual obligation; to institute a religion consummate in all respects, which should correct the faults and supply the defects of all precedent dispensations, which should therefore be, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which no other revelation was to be expected: *I will* (said Moses of him) *put words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him; and it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:*[a] by him Isaiah foretold, that *God shall teach us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem:*[b] by him Jeremiah signified, that *God would put his law into the inward parts of men, and write it in their hearts;*[c] it was, as it is said in Daniel, part of his work *to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy;*[d] and his days in the prophets are commonly styled *the last days*, because, it seemeth, of the perfection of his doctrine, and immutability of his law; where such an entire instruction and final resolution in all points was commonly expected by the Jews, as the Samaritan woman did intimate: *I know* (said she, according to the current persuasion then) *that the Messias cometh; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.*[e]

Now accordingly Jesus (*our hope*, and *author of our faith*[f]) hath taught a doctrine, hath proclaimd a law, hath instituted a religion, which upon strict and careful examination will be found most perfect in all respects; such in its nature as cannot but indispensably oblige all that understand it; such as is worthy of God, and suitable to his designs of glorifying himself, and obliging his creature; in short, he hath been author of such an

[a] Rev. v. 13.

[a] Deut. xviii. 18, 19. [b] Isa. ii. 3.
[c] Jer. xxxi. 33; Ezek. xxxvi. 27.
[d] Dan. ix. 24. [e] John iv. 25.
[f] 1 Tim. i. 1.

institution, as may be demonstrated the most excellent and complete that can be. For (briefly to show this by considering the main, if not all imaginable excellencies of any religion, law, or doctrine) it is impossible that any doctrine should assign a more true, proper, complete notion or character of God himself, more congruous to what reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, the purest tradition attesteth, or common experience doth intimate concerning God; more apt to breed in our hearts the highest affection and reverence toward him, or to engage us in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him; none can ascribe unto God higher perfections of nature, can more assert unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, can better commend and justfy to us all his actions and proceedings, can represent him more amiable in his goodness, more terrible in his justice, more glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence; can consequently better direct or dispose us to render unto him a worship worthy of him and acceptable to him; can also therefore with more security and advantage commend unto us the imitation of him in our disposition and demeanour.

Nor could any doctrine more clearly and fully inform us concerning ourselves; concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, final; what the dignity of our nature is, for what purposes we were designed and framed; wherein our happiness doth consist, what shall be our state after death, how we shall be judged and dealt with then; the knowledge of which particulars is of so immense consequence, for the satisfaction of our minds and direction of our lives; concerning which, therefore, men in all times have so earnestly inquired and disputed, without any sure resolution but from hence.

Nor could a more accurate rule of life (more congruous to reason and suitable to our nature, or perfective thereof; more conducible to our welfare and our content; more apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all) have been prescribed: nothing can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are the duties of piety (consisting in love, reverence, gratitude, devotion, obedience, faith and repentance toward God) which Christianism doth require. No directions concerning our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren can be imagined comparable to those (those of hearty love, good-will, beneficence, compassion, readiness to forgive, meekness, peaceableness, and the like) which the Christian law enjoineth. No precepts or advices concerning the management of ourselves (the ordering our souls and our bodies in their respective functions and fruitions) can be devised more agreeable to sound reason, more productive of true welfare and real delight unto us, than are those of being humble and modest in our conceits, calm and composed in our passions, sober and temperate in our enjoyments, patient and contented in our state, with the like, which the Christian doctrine doth inculcate. No other method can raise us up so near to heaven and happiness as that which we here learn, of abstracting and elevating our minds above the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; the fixing our thoughts, affections, and hopes, upon the concernments of a better future state.

No religion, also, can be purer from superstitious alloys, or freer from useless encumbrances (or from, as Tertullian calleth them, *busy scrupulosities**), than is this (such as it is in its native simplicity, and as it came from its Author, before the pragmatical curiosity, or domineering humour, or covetous designings of men, had tampered with it), it only requiring a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties plainly necessary or profitable; the ritual observances it enjoineth being, as very few in number, in nature simple and easy to observe, so evidently reasonable, very decent and very useful, able to instruct us in, apt to excite us to, the practice of most wholesome duties.

No religion also can have the like advantage of setting before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice, affording so compendious an instruction, and so efficacious an incitement to all piety and virtue: so absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommo-

* Negotiosæ scrupulositates.—*Tert. in Marc.* lib. ii.

dated for our imitation, and withal so strongly engaging us thereto, as the example of Jesus our Lord, such as it is in the Gospels represented to us.

Neither can any religion build our duty upon more solid grounds, or draw it from better principles, or drive it to better ends, or press it with more valid inducements, than ours; which builds it upon conformity to the perfect nature of God, and to the dictates of his infallible wisdom, upon the holy will and most just authority of our natural Lord and Maker; which draweth it from love, reverence, and gratitude to God, from a hearty goodwill to men, and from a sober regard to our own true welfare; which propoundeth God's honour, our neighbour's edification, and our own salvation, as the principal ends of action; which stirreth up good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble God, express our thankfulness, and discharge our duty to him, obtain his mercy and favour, acquire present comfort of mind and future bliss, avoid regrets of conscience here, and endless torments hereafter.

Neither can any doctrine afford more encouragements to the endeavours of practising it than doth this, which tendereth sufficient help and ability toward the performance of whatever it enjoineth; offering (upon our seeking them or asking for them) God's infallible wisdom to direct us in our darknesses and doubts; God's almighty strength to assist us in our temptations and combats, God's loving Spirit to comfort us in our afflictions and distresses.

Nor can any doctrine in a more sure or kindly manner appease and satisfy a man's conscience, so as to produce therein a well-grounded hope and solid comfort; to heal the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict, than doth this, which assureth us, that God Almighty, notwithstanding all our offences committed against him, is not only reconcilable to us, but desirous to become our friend; that he doth, upon our repentance, and compliance with his gentle terms, receive us into perfect grace and favour, discharging all our guilts and debts, however contracted; that our endeavours to serve and please God, although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere, shall be accepted and rewarded by him.

Such is the doctrine, law, and religion, of Jesus; expressed in a most unaffected and perspicuous way, with all the gravity and simplicity of speech, with all the majesty and authority of proposal becoming divine truth; so excellent, and so complete in all respects, that it is beyond the imagination of man to conceive anything better, yea, I dare say, repugnant to the nature of things that there should be any other way of religion (different substantially from it) so very good. God himself, we may presume to say, cannot infuse truer notions concerning himself or concerning us, cannot reveal more noble or more useful truths; cannot prescribe better laws or rules, cannot afford more proper means and aids, cannot propound more equal and reasonable terms, cannot offer higher encouragements and rewards, cannot discover his mind in a more excellent way than he hath done by Jesus, for his own glory and service, for our benefit and happiness: so that hence we may reasonably infer, that the doctrine taught, the law promulgated, the religion instituted by Jesus in God's name, are the very same which the predictions concerning the Messias do refer unto, as the last which should ever come from God, most full and perfect, universally and perpetually obliging.

2 Thus in general the prophets spake concerning the Messias's doctrine, and so that of Jesus correspondeth thereto: but of that doctrine particularly it was signified, that it should be very comfortable, joyful, and acceptable to mankind; as containing a declaration (peculiar thereto) of God's kind and gracious intentions toward us, overtures of especial mercy and love, dispensations of all sorts of spiritual blessings; the pardon and abolition of sins committed, peace and satisfaction of conscience, deliverance from spiritual slaveries and captivities; *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee:*[s] so Zechariah speaketh of his coming, and implieth the joyful purport of his message: and, *How beautiful* (saith Isaiah) *upon the mountains are the feet of*

[s] Zech. ix. 9.

him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth![h] and, *the Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance* (or of recompense,* as the LXX. render it) *of our God;*[i] *to comfort all that mourn; to give unto them that mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.* It is a part of what God in Jeremiah promised to dispense by him: *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.* It is one of the Messias's performances, *to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity; to sprinkle clean water on* God's people, and *to save them from their uncleannesses.* In fine, the prophet Zechariah saith of his time, that *in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.*[j]

Now to all this the preaching of Jesus did exactly correspond; it being indeed, as it was named, a gospel, or message of good and joy; declaring the special goodwill of God, and his merciful willingness to be reconciled to mankind; offering peace and pardon to all that are sensible of their guilt, and penitent for their sin; imparting rest, comfort, and liberty, to all that are weary and afflicted with spiritual burdens, grievances, and slaveries; taking off all grievous yokes of superstition, servility, and sin; and in their stead imposing a no less sweet and pleasant, than just and reasonable obedience; ministering all sorts of blessings needful for our succour, relief, ease, content, and welfare; wholly breathing sweetest love (all kinds of love; love between God and man, between man and man, between man and his own conscience;[k]) filling the hearts of those who sincerely embrace and comply with it, with present joy, and raising in them gladsome hopes of future bliss. It was indeed the most joyous sound that ever entered into man's ears, the most welcome news that ever was reported upon earth; news of a certain and perfect salvation from all the enemies of our welfare, from all the causes of mischief and misery to us; well, therefore, deserving that auspicious gratulation from the angel—*Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*[l]

3. Collateral unto, or coincident with, those performances (the teaching such a doctrine, publishing such a law, dispensing such blessings), was the formal institution and establishment of a new, everlasting covenant (different from all precedent covenants, and swallowing them up in its perfection), a covenant between God and man, wherein God, entering into a most strict alliance and relation with us, should be pleased to dispense the blessings of spiritual illumination and assistance, of mercy and favour, of salvation and felicity; wherein we, in way of condition, according to obligations of justice and gratitude, should engage to return unto God by hearty repentance, and to persist in faithful obedience to him: of such a covenant the Messias was to be the messenger and mediator, or *the angel* thereof (as the prophet Malachi speaketh, alluding, it seems, to that angel of God's presence, who ordained the Jewish law, and conducted the Israelites toward the promised land;[m]) of which covenant and its mediator, God in Isaiah thus spake: *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house:*[n] and of the same he again: *Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even*

* ἀνταποδόσεως.

[h] Isa. lii. 7.

[i] Isa. lxi. 1; xlii. 1, 3.

[j] Jer. xxxi. 34; Dan. ix. 24; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 29; Isa. xliv. 3; xliii. 25; Zech. xiii. 1.

[k] Acts xv. 32; Rom. v. 13; xiv. 17; Gal. v. 22.

[l] Luke ii. 10.

[m] Ἄγγελος τῆς διαθήκης, Mal. iii. 1; Exod. xxiii. 10; Isa. lxiii. 9; Acts vii. 35, 38, 53; Gal. iii. 19.

[n] Isa. xlii. 6, 7; xlix. 8; lv. 3.

the sure mercies of David—Behold, I have given him a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people:[o] so in general he speaketh thereof, and inviteth thereto. Then a special part thereof he expresseth thus: *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*[p] Of the same covenant God in Ezekiel speaketh thus: *I will set up one shepherd over them—and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them—and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore—they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.*[q] Of the same, God thus declareth in Jeremiah, most fully and plainly reckoning the particular blessings tendered therein: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more:*[r] which words signify the tenor of that covenant on God's part to import, that God would impart a full and clear discovery of his will unto them whom it should concern; that he would afford to them all requisite means and helps, qualifying them for the performance of their duty; that he would bestow on them (complying with the terms of this covenant, and performing their duty) an entire remission of all their sins, with an assurance of his constant and perpetual favour.

Now, that Jesus did institute such a covenant, wherein all the benefits promised on God's part, and all the duties required on our parts, do punctually correspond to the terms of that predesigned by the prophets, is apparent by the whole tenor of the Christian gospel; wherein a full declaration of God's will is held forth, so that no man (except out of wilfulness or negligence) can be ignorant thereof; wherein, upon condition of faith and repentance, God's mercy and pardon are exhibited and offered to all;[s] wherein the communication of God's holy Spirit of grace (for directing and assisting the embracers of this covenant in the practice of their duty) is promised and dispensed; wherein on our part faith in God (or heartily returning to him) and faithful observance of God's laws are required; wherein God declareth a most favourable regard and love (together with very near and endearing relations) to those who undertake and conform to his terms; of which new covenant Jesus is represented the Angel, the Mediator, the Sponsor; having by his preaching declared it, by his merits and intercessions purchased and procured it, by his blood ratified and assured it to us.[t]

4. In coincidence also with those performances, it is declared that the Messias should erect a kingdom spiritual in nature, universal in extent, and perpetual in duration; by the power and virtue whereof the enemies of God's people should be curbed and quelled; the subjects of which should live together in amity and peace, in safety and prosperity; wherein truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. The chief testimonies of ancient scripture predicting this kingdom I had occasion before to mention, and shall not repeat them now; only concerning the nature and extent thereof I shall add somewhat, serving for illustration and proof of our main purpose.

That it was to be a spiritual kingdom (not a visible dominion over the bodies and estates of men, managed by external force and co-action, but a government of men's hearts and consciences by secret inspirations, and moral instructions or

[o] Isa. lv. 3, 4. [p] Isa. lv. 7.
[q] Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 25; xxxvii. 26; xxxvi. 26, &c.
[r] Jer. xxxi. 31, &c.
[s] Luke xxiv. 47; Acts v. 31; ii. 38; Heb. x. 29.
[t] Heb. ix. 15; xii. 24; vii. 22; viii. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 5.

persuasions) may be several ways collected and argued: it appeareth from the temper and disposition of its Founder, who was to be *a Prince of Peace*;[u] of a peaceable, meek, patient, and humble disposition: it may be inferred from his condition, which was not to be a state of external grandeur and magnificence, but of poverty and affliction; for he was to be as he is described, mean and despicable in appearance; having *no form or comeliness, no beauty, that when we should see him, we should desire him;* being *a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief:*[v] it also followeth from the events happening to him, which were not to conquer and triumph openly in view of carnal eyes; but to be *despised* and rejected, to be afflicted, oppressed, and slaughtered by men; the same we may learn from the manner of its establishment and propagation; which was not to be effected by force and violence, but by virtue of a quiet and gentle instruction; by reasonable words, not by hard blows: so doth the prophet signify when he saith of the Messias, that, *with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked:*[w] not by force of hands, or terror of arms, not in furious and bloody combats, but by the spiritual *rod of his mouth*, with the soft *breath of his lips*, he was *to slay the wicked*, converting them unto righteousness: so doth Daniel also imply when he saith, that *a stone cut out of the mountains without hands should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms.*[x] Yea, the nature thereof itself doth argue the same; for the laws enjoined and duties required, the blessings ministered and rewards propounded therein, are purely spiritual, not relating to a temporal state, yea hardly consisting with secular domination; as may appear by attending to its fundamental constitution, or to the covenant settled between the Prince and subjects thereof; wherein the divine spirit and grace, light and knowledge, mercy and pardon for sins, comfort of mind, and peace of conscience, God's especial love and favour, things merely spiritual, are expressly promised; but worldly power, wealth, and prosperity, are pretermitted; and thence may justly be presumed no ingredients or appurtenances thereof. Indeed the constitution of a temporal or worldly kingdom, with visible pomp and lustre, such as the Jews (a grossly conceited and sensually affected people) did, mistaking the prophets, desire and expect, had been a thing, as very agreeable to the carnal or childish opinions of men, so in reasonable esteem of no considerable value, benefit, or use to mankind: such a domination could only have concerned the mortal part and temporal state of man; it could only have procured some trivial conveniences for our bodies, or gratifications to our sense: the settlement also, and preservation of such a kingdom (according to that vast extent and long duration which the prophets imply) seemeth, without quite altering the whole frame of human nature, scarce possible; and reasons there are obvious enough, why it would not be expedient or beneficial for men: but the founding and upholding a spiritual kingdom, (such as we described) is evidently of inestimable benefit to the nobler and more divine part of men; may serve to promote the eternal welfare of our souls; may easily, without changing the natural appetites of men, or disturbing the world, be carried on any where, and subsist for ever by the occult influences of divine grace: it consequently is most worthy of God to design and accomplish. Such a kingdom therefore was meant by the prophets, being indeed no other than a church, or society of persons, with unanimous consent heartily acknowledging the one true God of Israel, Maker of heaven and earth, for their Sovereign Prince and Lawgiver; submitting themselves in all their actions to his laws and commands, expecting protection and recompense of their obedience from him.

As for the general extent of his kingdom, and the Messias's proceedings in settling and propagating it, that is also very perspicuously and copiously represented in the ancient prophets, who declare that by him mankind (then immersed in deep ignorance and error, in wretched impiety

[u] Isa. ix. 6.
[v] Isa. liii. 2, 3, 4, 7; xlix. 7; l. 6.
[w] Isa. xi. 4. [x] Dan. ii. 44, 45.

and wickedness, in utter estrangement and aversation from God and goodness) should be reduced to the knowledge, worship, and obedience of God; that they should be received into God's protection, and should partake of his special favour; that all nations of men should by the Messias be enlightened with saving knowledge, and converted to the practice of true righteousness; that all men every where (all that would regard and observe his word, all in God's design and desire, in effect a numerous company of men) should by his means be aggregated to God's church, and rendered God's people; enjoying the benefits and privileges suitable to that state or relation. In expressing these things the ancient scriptures are very pregnant and copious: Moses, in that most divine song (indited by God himself, and uttered in his name) which seemeth to contain the history and the continual fate of the Jewish people, doth foretell this, and concludeth his song therewith; as with the last matter which should happen during God's special relation to that people; importing the period of Judaism, or of the Israelitish theocracy: *Rejoice* (saith he) *O ye nations, with his people.*[y] God in the second Psalm thus speaketh to the Messias: *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession:*[z] and in the 72d Psalm; *His name* (it is said) *shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed; he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth:*[a] and otherwhere; *All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee:*[b] and, *I will* (saith God in Isaiah concerning him) *give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth:*[c] and, *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it: The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God:*[d] and, *He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles* (that is, the European nations) *shall wait for his law:*[e] and, *In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined; and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations:*[f] and, *In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek; and its rest shall be glorious:*[g] and, *I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name:*[h] and, *It shall come to pass in the last days* (say both Isaiah and Micah in the same words) *that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it;*[i] and, *From the rising of the sun* (saith God in Malachi) *even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering:*[j] and, *I* (saith God in Hosea) *will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say unto them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God: in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God:*[k] and *The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee* (saith God to his church;) *the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee: Fear not, for I am with thee; I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth:*[l] and, *Sing, O barren, thou*

[y] Deut. xxxii. 43; Rom. xv. 10.
[z] Psal. ii. 8. [a] Psal. lxxii. 17; viii. 1.
[b] Psal. xxii. 27; lxxxvi. 9.
[c] Isa. xlvi. 9; Acts xiii. 47.
[d] Isa. xl. 5; lii. 10; Luke iii. 6.
[e] Isa. xlii. 4; Rom. xv. 2.
[f] Isa. xxv. 6, 7. [g] Isa. xi. 10.
[h] Isa. lxv. 1; Rom. ix. 24.
[i] Isa. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1. [j] Mal. i. 11.
[k] Hos. ii. 23; i. 10; Rom. ix. 26, 25; Isa. lx. 5.
[l] Isa. xliii. 5, 6; liv. 1-5.

that didst not bear (it is said to the Gentile church;) *break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child :*[m] *for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord : Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations—for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left ; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles—for thy Maker is thine husband (the Lord of hosts is his name ;) and thy Redeemer the Holy one of Israel ;*[n] *The Lord of the whole earth shall be called—The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them ; the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose,*[o] &c.

Such is the nature and such the extent of the Messias's kingdom ; now that Jesus hath erected and settled a kingdom of a spiritual and heavenly nature (the which is therefore in his gospel styled the *kingdom of heaven*, the *kingdom of God*, the *kingdom of Christ*, the *kingdom that was to come*), whereof God is the absolute Sovereign ; the throne whereof is in heaven above, which beareth sway in the souls of men ; wherein God governeth in effectual manner (most righteously and sweetly, with admirable wisdom, justice, and clemency ; with mighty power also, and awful authority), according to most excellent laws, by his holy word and powerful spirit ; proposing most precious rewards to the obedient subjects thereof, and threatening dreadful punishments to the rebellious ; protecting and saving the faithful people from all their enemies (from the powers of darkness, from the temptations, allurements, menaces of the flesh and the world here, from death and hell hereafter ;) that also Jesus (who, as Mediator between God and man, doth according to the gospel, by authority derived from God, and in God's name, administer the government hereof) hath in effect been avowed as Lord and King ; that his authority hath had great efficacy upon the minds and consciences of men ; what noble tropies over sin and wickedness his word hath raised ; in what glory and majesty through many ages he hath reigned, is evident from obvious records of history and from plain experience.

The extent of this spiritual empire raised by our Lord (of that doctrine which he taught, of that reformation which he introduced, of that church, or spiritual society, knit together in faith and charity, which he founded, of that whole dispensation which he managed) is also thoroughly commensurate to the extent of whatever in these kinds the Messias was to achieve : the empire of Jesus in its nature and design, according to right and obligation, is declared universal and boundless, coextended with the world itself, and comprehending all generations of men ; all nations being summoned to come under the wings of its jurisdiction ; all persons being invited to partake the benefits, and enjoy the privileges thereof : *The Lord*, and *Judge of all men ;* the *Saviour*, and *Redeemer of the world ;*[p] the common *light of men*, and *Captain of* human *life ;* are titles, which Jesus assumed to himself : *All things are delivered to me of my Father ; Thou hast given him power over all flesh ; All judgment is committed to the Son ;*[q] yea, *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth*[r]—such is the authority he claimeth and asserteth himself : *Going into the world, preach the gospel to every creature ; Go, and discipline all nations, baptizing them*[s]—such was the commission and charge delivered by Jesus to his officers and ministers : *The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men ; The times of ignorance God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent ; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins ; God our saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth ; The gospel hath been preached to every creature under heaven*[t]—so do the apostles declare the latitude of the evangelical dispensation according to its nature and design : so that well may we cry out with Clemens Alexandrinus,

[m] Gal. iv. 27.
[n] *Vide* Amos ix. 11, 12 ; Acts xv. 15, &c.
[o] Isa. xxxv. 1.
[p] Acts x. 35.
[q] Matt. xi. 27 ; John xvii. 2 ; v. 22 ; iii. 35.
[r] Matt. xxviii. 18.
[s] Mark xvi. 15 ; Matt. xxviii. 19 ; Luke xxiv. 46.
[t] Tit. ii. 11 ; Acts xvii. 30 ; 2 Cor. v. 19 ; 1 Tim. ii. 4 ; Col. i. 23.

*Hearken, ye that are afar off, hearken ye that are near; the word is not hid from any, it is a common light, it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian in respect to the gospel.** So in design and of right is Jesus's doctrine and dispensation common to all nations and to all persons; all in duty are obliged to entertain it; all may have the benefit thereof, who are fit and willing to embrace it; it doth not indeed obtrude its benefits upon unwilling, and thence unworthy persons; it useth no unkindly violence, or rude compulsion; but it alloweth, it inviteth, it entreateth, it engageth, all men to come, excluding only those from a participation therein, who will not hear its call; who do not like or love it.

In effect, also, this kingdom hath been very large and vast, a considerable part of the world having very soon been subjugated by its virtue, and having submitted thereto. *As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming* (or presence) *of the Son of man be;*[n] said he concerning the sudden and effectual spreading of his doctrine; and the event answered his prediction: for the evangelical light did in an instant dart itself all about, so as in many places to dispel the night of ignorance, and to dissipate the fogs of wickedness: so that *the utmost ends of the earth* (of which according to the most literal sense we ourselves are a most proper instance) are come under the possession and government of Jesus; are reduced to the acknowledgment and veneration of the only true God; do partake of God's favour, and hope in his mercy; do with good conscience (in that measure which is expectable from the natural infirmity and pravity of man, in various degrees, some more, some less strictly) serve God, and obey his laws: a church, and spiritual Zion (spread over divers regions and countries, consisting of several nations and languages), compacted in good order and sweet communion, hath through a long course of time visibly flourished in competent degrees of peace, prosperity, and glory;[v] commending and cherishing true religion, charity, and sobriety; offering continual sacrifices of holy devotion unto God, celebrating the divine name and praises; producing many noble examples of all piety and virtue; a church in all regards adequate to the prophetical expressions concerning that which was out of the whole world to be collected and constituted by the Messias.

5. If we do singly compare the particular consequences and successes of the Messias's performances, expressed by the prophets; we shall find an exact correspondence to what hath followed the undertakings and performances of our Lord.

They tell us, that great opposition should be made against it by the Jews and by the Gentiles.[w]

They tell us, that the Messias's person should be acknowledged, worshipped, and blessed all over the world: *All nations* (say they) *shall serve him,—all nations shall call him blessed:*[x] this we see for almost seventeen hundred years abundantly performed in respect to Jesus, by the daily services of praise and thanksgiving yielded to him in the universal church.

They say, that the knowledge of God shall be far extended and diffused over the world: *The earth* (say they) *shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea:*[y] this we see fulfilled by the large propagation of Christian doctrine.

They affirm, that righteousness in the times of the Messias should commonly prosper, and be in high request, according to that; *In his days shall the righteous flourish:*[z] so we see, that virtue and piety have, ever since Jesus commended them to the world, enjoyed much repute; having been practised among the professors of his religion in such degrees and according to such manner, as the condition of this world, the humours of men, and the nature of human affairs, do admit; nor reasonably can any prophecies be understood to mean further.

They further intimate, that upon the entertainment of the Messias's doctrine and law, abundance of peace and concord, of love and charity, of innocence

* Ἀκούσατε οὖν οἱ μακρὰν, ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη τινὶς ὁ λόγος· φῶς ἐστε κοινὸν, ἐπιλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· οὐδεὶς Κιμμέριος ἐν λόγῳ.—Clem. Alex. Protrept.

[n] Matt. xxiv. 27.

[v] Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61, p. 634.

[w] Psal. ii. 1; *vide* Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61, p. 657.

[x] Psal. lxxii. 11, 17.

[y] Isa. xi. 9.

[z] Psal. lxxii. 7.

and justice, should ensue; so that the fellow-subjects of this kingdom, although of different states and complexions (the *wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the lion and the ox, the asp and the young child:*[a] that is, the rich and the poor, the mighty and the weak, the fierce and the gentle, the crafty and the simple sorts of men), should live and converse together amicably, safely, and pleasantly, without molesting, wronging, oppressing, and devouring; but rather helping and benefiting each other: *They shall not* (saith the prophet) *hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain:*[b] to the making good of which particular, the doctrine of Jesus doth temper and compose the minds of those who do truly understand and embrace it: such as are Christians indeed (careful followers of Jesus's rules and example) are thereby disposed to maintain peace and amity between themselves, yea to perform all offices of charity and kindness to one another, although their conditions in the world, their complexions, their endowments and abilities, be however different; for the Christian doctrine representeth all that embrace it as fellow-servants of the same Lord, as brethren and children of the same Father, as members of the same body, as objects of the same divine regard and love, as partakers of the same privileges, professors of the same truth, consorts of the same hope, coheirs of the same glory and happiness, as thence united and allied to one another by the strictest bands and most endearing relations; hence it supplieth the stoutest heart, and sweeteneth the fiercest tempers; it inclineth persons of highest state, power, wealth, knowledge, to condescensive humility and meekness toward the meanest; this reason presently occurring to every Christian mind, that no Christian brother is indeed contemptible, can without folly, may without sin, be contemned: whence although Jesus's doctrine hath not quite removed wars and contentions out of the world, yea not out of that part thereof which doth acknowledge him (for that were a thing impossible, without a total alteration of human nature, or rooting out of it those appetites of pride, voluptuousness, self-love, and covetousness, which are the seeds of strife; the effecting which it cannot be supposed that the prophets did intend), yet it hath done considerably toward it; it hath disposed many persons (many great and considerable in the world) to a very just, innocent, and peaceable conversation; it hath kindled ardent love and compassion toward all mankind in many hearts; it hath produced great fruits of charity and bounty in persons of all sorts; it hath had no small influence upon the common state of things, causing human affairs to be managed with much equity and gentleness, restraining outrageous iniquity and oppression.

It was also further particularly foretold, that great princes and potentates should submit to the Messias, seriously avowing his authority over them, yielding veneration to his name, and obedience to his laws; with their power and wealth promoting and encouraging the religion instituted by him, defending and cherishing his faithful people: *All kings* (said the Psalmist of him) *shall fall before him; all nations shall do him service: To a servant of rulers* (said Isaiah also of him) *kings shall see and arise, the princes also shall do worship:*[c] and the same prophet concerning his church: *Kings* (saith he) *shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet: The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising;—The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee;—Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings;—The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory.*[d] All this we see plainly to have been accomplished, for that soon the highest of earthly powers did submit and stoop thereto; that many great princes (great and glorious as ever the world hath known any; such as Constantine, Theodosius, Charlemagne, and others of like illustrious renown) have willingly entertained Jesus's doctrine, and gladly undergone his yoke; that long successions of emperors and kings

[a] Psal. lxxii. 7; lxxxv. 10; Isa. xi. 6; lxv. 25; ii. 4; lxvi. 12.
[b] Isa. xi. 5; lxv. 25.
[c] Psal. lxxii. 11; Isa. xlix. 7, 23; lii. 15.
[d] Isa. lx. 3, 10, 16; lxii. 2.

through the best frequented and most civilized part of the world have seriously professed themselves the subjects and servants of Jesus; expressing humble adoration of his person, and yielding observance to his laws; maintaining the profession of his religion by their power, supporting the ministers of it by their bounty, cherishing the practice thereof by manifold helps and encouragements; they have seemed ambitious of titles drawn from performances of this nature, affecting and glorifying to be styled, *Most Christian Kings*, *Catholic Kings*, *Defenders of the Faith*, and *Sons of the Church*.*

It was also to be a particular consequence of what the Messias should do, that by virtue of his performances idolatry (that is, the worship of wicked spirits, or of fictitious deities) should in a conspicuous manner be vanquished, driven away, and destroyed; the worship of the only true God being substituted in its room: *The Lord alone* (saith Isaiah concerning his times) *shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish:* and, *It shall come to pass* (saith Zechariah) *in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the name of the idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered; and also I will cause the prophets, and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land.*[e] Now this we know was soon effected by the doctrine of our Lord, in a most remarkable manner: idolatry in all places where it came, did flee and vanish before it; the Devil's frauds (whereby he so long had abused and befooled mankind) being detected, and that authority which he had usurped over the world being utterly disavowed; all the pack of infernal apostate spirits being not only rejected and disclaimed, but scorned and detested. Jesus (as the gospel telleth us, and as experience confirmeth) did combat the *strong one*, did baffle and bind him; he disarmed and rifled him; he triumphed over him, and exposed him to shame; he cast him out and dissolved all his works.[f] At the appearance of Jesus's doctrine, and the sound of his name, his altars were deserted, his temples fell down, his oracles were struck dumb, his arts were supplanted, all his worship and kingdom were quite subverted. The sottish adoration of creatures (by the suggestion also of Satan, and by man's vain fancy advanced to a participation of divine honour) was also presently banished, and thrown away; the only true God (the Maker and Lord of all things) being thenceforth acknowledged and adored as the only fountain of good, and the sole object of worship.

Again, whereas in regard to all these performances, the state of things constituted by the Messias is described so different from the former state of mankind, that it is called the creation of a new world:* *For behold* (saith God in Isaiah concerning the Messiah's times) *I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind* (whence the Jews commonly before our Lord's time were used to call the Messiah's time *the world to come*, *the future age;*[g]) it is plain that Jesus may well be esteemed to have accomplished the intent of those expressions;† he (as the ἐπανορθωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου, the rectifier and rearer of the world, as Origen calleth him) having wrought so huge alterations in the minds, and hearts, and lives of men, in their principles and opinions, in their dispositions and in their practices; having so changed the face of affairs, and reformed the course of things in the world; bringing men out of lamentable darkness and error into clear light and knowledge, rescuing them from superstition, impiety, and wickedness, and engaging them into ways of true religion, holiness, and righteousness; so many persons being apparently *renewed in the spirit of their minds;* being made *new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness;* so

* Οὐ γὰρ ἀρνησαίμην ἄν, ἐφ' ᾧ μάλιστα χαίρω συνθεράπων ὑμέτερος πεφυκέναι.—Const. apud Eus. de Vit. Const. iii.——Ἐγὼ δ συνθεράπων ὑμέτερος καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἶναι χαίρων.—Const. apud Socr. i. 9, in Epist. ad Eccl. Alexandr.

[e] Isa. ii. 17, 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Zech. xiii. 2.

* Καιρὸς διορθώσεως,—Heb. ix. 10.

† Οἰκουμένη μέλλουσα, Heb. ii. 5.—Ὁ μέλλων αἰών, Heb. vi. 5; Orig. in Cels. 3.

[f] John xii. 31; xvi. 11; Eph. ii. 2; 2 Cor. iv. 8; Col. i. 13; Acts xxvi. 18; Matt. xii. 29; Luke xi. 21; Col. ii. 15; John xii. 31; xvi. 11; 1 John iii. 8.

[g] Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22; xliii. 18.

that, as the apostle speaks, *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*;[h] so that what the contumacious Jews in anger and ill-will did call Jesus's instruments, had a true sense; they were οἱ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἀναστατώσαντες, they *who had turned the world upside down*;[i] they did so indeed, but so as to settle it in a better posture.

Concerning which good effects of Christian religion, the ancient Christians had good reason to glory, and to say with Origen, *The adversaries of Christianism do not discern, how many men's diseases of soul, and how many floods of vices, have been restrained; and how many men's savage manners have been tamed by reason of the Christian doctrine; wherefore, being satisfied with the public beneficialness thereof, which by a new method doth free men from many mischiefs, they ought willingly to render thanks thereto, and yield testimony, if not to the truth of it, yet to its profitableness to mankind.*†

There remain behind several important considerations appertaining to this purpose, concerning the performances of the Messias, and events about him; his being to suffer grievous things from men, and for men; his performing miraculous works; the yielding various attestations from heaven to his person and doctrine; from the congruity of which particulars to what Jesus did endure and act; and to what God hath done in regard to him, the truth of our conclusion, that *Jesus is the very Christ*, will be manifest: but time now forbiddeth the prosecution of those matters; and I must therefore reserve it to other occasion.

Now, *To him that is able to keep us from falling* [offending], *and to present us blameless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now, and for ever.*[j]

Unto the King eternal [of ages], *immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.*[k] Amen.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Salvation be unto our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.[l] Amen.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.—*Providing that Jesus is the Christ.*

WHAT is the true notion of the name or title *Christ*, we (in discoursing formerly upon this text) did explain. That one person, to whom that notion signally doth agree, was by God's especial determination to come into the world, we did also in the next place, from prophetical instruction (backed with the common tradition and current opinion of God's people) declare. We further in the sequel did propound to show, that Jesus (whom we acknowledge) was that very person; the Messias predicted by the prophets, and expected by the Jews. This we have already, in the foregoing Discourses, proved from several circumstances of his birth and coming among men; from his personal qualifications, and from divers illustrious performances managed by him, in correspondency to what the prophets foretold concerning the Messias. The same we now proceed to confirm from other very considerable particulars foretold by them, and suiting to him; and

* Οἱ δὲ κατήγοροι τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ οὐχ ὁρῶσιν, &c.—Orig. in Cels. lib. i. p. 50; *vide* Chrys. in 1 Cor. i.

[h] Eph. iv. 23, 24; 2 Cor. v. 17.

[i] Acts xvii. 6.

[j] Jude 24, 25.

[k] 1 Tim. i. 17.

[l] Rev. v. 13; vii. 10; v. 12; i. 5, 6.

first from those things which the Messias was to undergo and suffer.[a]

That the Messias was to come in a humble and homely manner (without appearances of worldly splendour or grandeur;) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness; that he was to be disregarded and despised by men; that he was to cause offences, and to find oppositions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be scorned and hated, to be disgracefully and hardly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea, that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned, and executed as a malefactor, is a truth which the Jews (although they firmly believed and earnestly expected the coming of a Messias) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits, yea inconsistent with the nature and drift of their religion, as they understood it. For their religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity, and prosperity as things highly valuable; did propound them as very proper (if not as the sole) rewards of piety and obedience; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard; they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction, and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell: they particularly did conceit, that to be rich was a necessary qualification to a prophet (no less necessary, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good life:) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem; The Spirit of God rests not upon a poor man* (that is, no special communications of grace, wisdom, goodness, are ever by God afforded to persons of a low or afflicted condition), was a rule they had framed, and which passed among them. That he, therefore, who was designed to be so notable a prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory, who therefore must be so highly favoured by God, should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd, could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had also (in congruity to those prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and self-flattery which were peculiar to that nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion that the Messias was to come in a great visible state and power; to do acts of great prowess and renown, to bring the nations of the world into subjection under him, and so to reign among them in glorious majesty and prosperity. When Jesus therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications, and performances to the prophetical characters of the Messias) did appear, such as he did, with pretences (or intimations rather) that he was the Messias, their stomach rose at it, they were hugely offended at him, they deemed him not only a madman (one possessed or distracted) and an imposter, but a blasphemer;[b] for to be no less than blasphemy they took it, for so pitiful a wretch to arrogate unto himself so high a dignity, so near a relation to God, as the being the Messias did import.[c] We see even the disciples of our Lord so deeply tainted with this national prejudice, that (even after they had acknowledged him to be *the Christ*) they could not with patience hear him foretelling what should befall him (St. Peter upon that occasion, even just after he had confessed him to be *the Christ*,[d] did, as the text says, take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord.*[e]) Yea, presently after that he most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of kingdoms, and being grandees in them; yea, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demand of him whether he would *at that time restore the kingdom unto Israel*,[f] (meaning such an external visible kingdom.)

This, hence, of all *things notifying* the Messias, seems to be the only particular which in general the Jews did not, or would not, see and acknowledge: and this caused them to oversee all *the rest*, how clearly soever shining in and about

[a] Acts iii. 18; Luke xviii. 31.

[b] Matt. xiv. 20.

[c] Matt. xiii. 57; xxvi. 65.

[d] Matt. xvi. 22; xvii. 2; John xvi. 12.

[e] Matt. xx. 21, 25.

[f] Acts i. 6.

the person of Jesus. This cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being affected with the wonderfulness of his works;* from minding or crediting all the testimonies ministered from heaven unto him. This, as St. Paul tells us, was the great scandal which obstructed their embracing the gospel.[g] We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars, allege the general consent of God's people, in expounding the prophets according to our sense; this being one of those points in respect to which the prophets did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that they should *look and not see, hear and not understand;*[h] yielding herein special occasion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?*[i]

Yet notwithstanding their (affected) blindness, there is no particular concerning the Messias, in the ancient scripture, either more frequently (in way of mystical insinuation, or adumbration) glanced at, or more clearly (in direct and plain language) expressed, or which also, by reasonable deductions thence, may be inferred more strongly than this. St. Peter affirms, that *God had foreshowed it by the mouth of all his prophets;* (not only of some, but *of all his prophets;*[j]) the same our Lord himself did signify before his departure to his disciples, out of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms, showing them this particular, and opening their minds to understand the scriptures concerning it; concluding his discourse to them thus: *Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν, Thus it was written, and thus ought Christ* (according to the prophetical presignifications and predictions) *to suffer.*

For the explaining and confirming of which truth, let us presume here to make a preparatory discourse or digression (not unseasonable perhaps, or improper to our purpose) concerning the nature of divine presignifications, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient scripture in the New Testament (the which, together with others connected to them, or bearing analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.) We may then consider, that the all-wise God (who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are present), having before eternal times, as St. Paul speaketh, determined in due time to send the Messias for accomplishing the greatest design that ever was to be managed in this world (which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the greatest benefit to the principal of his creatures here), did by his incomprehensible providence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency and advantageous reference thereto;[k] so that when it came upon the stage, it might appear that the main of the plot consisted therein, and that whatever before was acted, had a principal respect thereto. As, therefore, from the beginning of things, God did in a gradual method make real preparations toward it, by steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order to it (somewhat to Adam himself, more to Abraham and the Patriarchs, somewhat further to Moses, much more yet to divers of the prophets among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered several instructions conformable to it, and nearly conducing to the promoting thereof;) so he did also take especial care by many apposite *resemblances,** handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it; that so at length it might show itself with more solemnity, and less surprise. The most eminent persons, therefore, whom he raised up and employed in his affairs tending to that end, as they did resemble the Messias in being instruments of his particular grace and providence[l] (being

* Nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset.—*Tert. in Marc.* iii. 6.

[g] 1 Cor. i. 23.

[h] *Vide* Tert. ibid.; Isa. vi. 9; Ezek. xii. 2; Matt. xiii. 13; Acts xxviii. 26.

[i] Isa. liii. 1.

[j] Acts iii. 18; Luke xxiv. 44.

* Νοητὰ θεωρήματα, Eusebius calls them, *Eccl. Hist.* i. 4.

[k] Eph. i. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 7; Eph. i. 3; iii. 9; Rom. xvi. 25; Col. i. 26.

[l] Heb. viii 6; Gal. iii. 19; Neh. ix. 27; Acts vii. 35.

indeed inferior Christs and mediators, and partial saviours of his people, as they are sometimes called,*) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they did, in the principal accidents befalling them, to represent him; as also the rites and services instituted by them were adapted to the same purpose; they and all things about them being fitted by God's especial wise care, so as to be congruous emblems and shadows presignifying the Christ, and what appertained to him;[m] his circumstances and accidents, his performances, his institutions. Thus was Adam, as St. Paul calls him, a type of Christ; Abel, Melchizedek, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel, are also intimated to have been such; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suited to answer somewhat that was remarkable concerning him; we may say of them all, as the apostle to the Hebrews says of the Jewish priests, *They served to the* subindication and *shadowing of heavenly things* (*οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.*[n]) In David particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof often (as we before noted) in the prophets (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea,) the Messias is called by his name. It indeed well suited the dignity of this great Person, and the importance of his business, that he should have such notable ushers, heralds, and harbingers *going before his face;*[o] furnished with conspicuous badges and ensigns denoting their relation to him; it was proper that God should appear always to have had an express care and especial regard toward him. It consequently serves for our edification; for that we, duly comparing things, and discerning this admirable correspondence, may be somewhat instructed thereby, and somewhat confirmed in our faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's wisdom and goodness (so provident for our good;) may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the Messias, and to esteem his design.† *All these things* (saith St. Paul, having compared divers things concering Moses to things concering Christ) *happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.*[p] It is also (for illustration, and also for proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of Christ, many things are spoken of them as such; many things are ascribed to them, which only or chiefly were intended of him;[q] their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed not to divine wisdom convenient or seasonable in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men (why God should choose to express things of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it may be perhaps for reasons best known to himself, and above our ken or cognizance; yet probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea, some more than probable being hinted in scripture:[r] it may be for a decent and harmonious distinction of times, of dispensations, of persons; it may be from the depth of things to conciliate a reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of doing so; it may be to exercise and improve men's understanding, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them humble; it may be to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word; it may be for occasion of freely conveying special gifts of interpretation; it may be to conceal some things from some persons unfit or unworthy to know them, especially from persons haughty and self-conceited;[s] it may be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great event (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;*[t]) it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly dis-

* Εἰκονικοὶ Χριστοὶ (Christs in effigie), Eusebius calls them, *Eccl. Hist.* i. 4.

† Ὅτι δὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ τῆς τοῦ μόνου καὶ ἀληθοῦς Χριστοῦ τοῦ κατὰ πάντων βασιλεύοντος θείου λόγου βασιλικῆς καὶ ἀρχικῆς ἐξουσίας τοὺς τύπους δι' ἑαυτοῦ ἔφερον.—(Euseb. 16, &c.)

[m] Heb. viii. 5; Exod. xxv. 40; Rom. v. 14.

[n] Heb. viii. 5.

[o] Heb. viii. 5; x. 1; ix. 23; Gal. iv. 24; Col. ii. 17.

[p] 1 Cor. x. 11, 6.

[q] *Vide* de Script. Obs. et Proph. Chrys. tom. vi. p. 649, &c., et 658, &c.

[r] Rev. ii. 7, &c.; xiii. 18; xvii 9; Matt. xiii. 9; xxiv. 15; Dan. ix. 1; John v. 39; Luke xxiv. 45; 1 Cor. xii. 10; xiv. 26; Eph. i. 9, 10.

[s] Matt. xiii. 13; xi. 25; vii. 6.

[t] Acts iii. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 8.

covered to all persons; it is evident that some things are purposely couched in parabolical and mysterious expression; it is particularly the manner of prophetical instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season and every capacity; but to return from out of this parenthesis to our case.) That under the names of persons representing Christ (or of things we may add adumbrating his things) many things are intimated concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after a very improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation; such as doth not well suit to the nature of true histories and serious promises. Thus, for instance, are many things foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous estate of the Jewish Church, which history and experience testify never (according to strictness of literal acceptation, yea not in any tolerable degree near the height of what the words import) to have happened.[u] Thus also, as the apostle to the Hebrews well argueth, effects are attributed to the Jewish rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of the thing cannot belong to them, otherwise than as shadows and substitutes of higher things.[v] Thus also, what is with solemn oath promised to Solomon (concerning the vast extent and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace, and prosperity;[w] together with his mighty acts and victorious achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been performed. Thus also David, as St. Peter observes and argues in the second of the Acts, speaketh many things of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him.[x] Such things, therefore, are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect state of things under the Messias; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) and his dispensation, which was to contain the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified.[y] This is that which St. Austin signifies when he says, *Which Christ* (saith he, *and what concerns him*)—*all the promises of that nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacrifices, their temple, and altogether all their sacraments did resound, or express.**

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the New Testament, but they agree (as to their general importance) to the sense of the ancient Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of scriptures. They supposed a *midrash* or mystical sense of scripture, which they very studiously (even to excess commonly) did search after. It was, as Lud. Capellus affirms, a confident and constant opinion of their doctors, that all things in Moses's law were typical, and capable of mystical exposition.[z] And Philo's writings (composed in or immediately after our Saviour's times) are a plain confirmation of what he saith; we have also several instances and intimations thereof in the New Testament.[a] Neither, probably, would the apostles in their discourses and disputations with the Jews have used this way of interpreting and citing passages of scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Now these things being (cursorily) premised, we return into our way, and say, that the Messias's being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing itself should be, there is a peculiar reason why it should be so represented, thus expressed by Tertullian: *The sacrament indeed* (saith he) *of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predications; forasmuch as that the more incredible it was, if it should have been preached nakedly, the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be shaded, that the difficulty of understanding it*

[u] Isa. xxv. 8.
[v] Heb. x. 4.
[w] Psal. xlv. lxxii. lxxxiii. &c.
[x] Acts ii. 29.

* Quem Christum—omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiæ, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, et cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt.—*Aug. ad Volus. Ep.* iii.

[y] Rom. x. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 13; Luke xxii. 37.
[z] In Exerc. ad Zohar.
[a] Matt. xxi. 9, 42; xxii. 32, 42.

to drink;[i])—their disposal of his gar-
*might cause the seeking of God's grace.**
Supposing also it should be, the passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias, Jeremiah (and the like), may congruously be applied thereto; the elevation of the brazen serpent, and the killing of the paschal lamb, may appositely represent it; the Jewish priests, with all their sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in and accommodated thereto: these things are not indeed by themselves alone apt peremptorily to evince that it should be; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the supposition thereof, according to the notion we touched about the typical relation between the matters of the old world before the Messias, and those of the new one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the Messias's sufferings were implied in the afflictions of his representative king David, such as he in several Psalms (the 35th, 69th, 109th, 118th, and especially in the 22d Psalm) describeth them: wherein divers passages (expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition) occur, which by the history of his life do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his person; which therefore there is a necessity, or (at least) much reason, that they should be applied to the Messias, whom David did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing then the passages we have there, to what befell Jesus, we shall find an admirable harmony, there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in emphatical and express terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and despised by the people;*[b])—the causeless hatred and enmity of the populacy and of the great ones toward him (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: they compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause;*[c]—) the ingrateful requital made to him for all the good done by him, and intended by him (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love;*)—their rejecting him (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner;*[d])—their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him (*Without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul:* and, *False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not:* and, *the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue;*[e])—their bitter insulting over him in his affliction (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea the abjects gathered themselves together against me: They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded:* καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, *and to the smart of my wounds they added,* say the LXX.[f]) their scornful reviling, flouting, and mocking him (*All they that see me, laugh me to scorn, they shoot the lip; they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. I became a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me, they shaked their heads. They opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha! Aha! our eye hath seen it.* Ἐπείρασαν με, ἐξεμυκτήρισαν, με μυκτηρισμὸν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν. *They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me;*)—the cruel manner of their dealings with him (*Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierce my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me;*[g])—their dealing with him, when in his distress he called for some refreshment (*They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar*

* Utique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat; quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum; quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum, ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quæreret.—*Tertull. in Judæos*, cap. 10.

[b] Psal. xxii. 6.

[c] Psal. lxix. 4; xxxv. 7; cix. 3.

[d] Psal. xxxv. 12; cix. 5; cxviii. 22.

[e] Psal. xxxv. 7, 11; cix. 2.

[f] Psal. xxxv. 15: lxix. 26.

[g] Psal. xxii. 7, 8; cix. 25; xxxv. 21, 16.

[h] Psal. xxii. 16. [i] Psal. lxix. 20

ments upon his suffering (*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture;*)—his being deserted of his friends, and destitute of all consolation (*I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children: I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none* [k])—the sense of God's withholding his favour and help (*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me?* [l])—his charitable disposition and behaviour toward his persecutors (*But as for me, when they were sick* (or as the LXX. *when they did trouble me*, Ἐν τῷ αὐτοὺς παρενοχλεῖν μοι), *my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom: I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother:* [m])—which passages and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the gospels, I need not to show; we do all, I suppose, well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able ourselves to make the application.

But there are not only such oblique intimations, shrouded under the overture of other persons and names, but direct and immediate predictions concerning the Messias's being to suffer, most clearly expressed. That whole famous chapter in Isaiah (the 53d chapter) doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented. His appearing meanness (*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him;*)—the disgrace, contempt, repulses, and rejection he underwent (*He is despised and rejected of men—we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not;*)—his afflicted state (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;*)—the bitter and painful manner of his affliction (*He was stricken; bore stripes, was wounded, was bruised;*)—his being accused, adjudged, and condemned as a malefactor (*He was taken from prison and from judgment—he was numbered among transgressors;*)—his consequent death (*He poured out his soul unto death: He was cut out of the land of the living;* [n])—the design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by divine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins, and our salvation (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin:—He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed:—Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:—For the transgression of my people he was smitten:—The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all;*)—his sustaining all this with a willing patience and meekness (*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth;*)—his charitable praying for his persecutors; so that they may be understood (*He made intercession for their transgressors;*)—the consequence and success of his sufferings (*He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many;* and, *I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong:* [o])—which passages, as they most exactly suit to Jesus, and might in a manner constitute an historical narration of what he did endure, together with the opinions taught in the gospel concerning the intent and effect of his sufferings; so that they did (according to the intention of the divine Spirit) relate to the Messias, may from several considerations be apparent; the context and coherence of all this passage with the pre-

[k] Psal. xxii. 18. [l] Psal. xxii. 1; lxix. 17. [m] Psal. xxxv. 13.

[n] Isa. liii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 12, 8, 7.
[o] Isa. liii. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6, 12, 7, 12, 10, 11, 12.

cedent and subsequent passages, which plainly respect the Messias, and his times: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings?* and, *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently,*[p] &c. are passages immediately going before, of which this 53d chapter is but a continuation; and immediately after it followeth, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear*, &c., being a very elegant and perspicuous description of the church augmented by accession of the Gentiles, which was to be brought to pass by the Messias. The general scope of this whole prophecy argues the same; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other person imaginable beside the Messias, doth further evince it; so high are the things which are attributed to the suffering Person; as that he should *bear the sins* of all God's people, and heal them; that he should *by his knowledge justify many;* that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand;* that God would *divide him a portion with the great*, and that he should *divide the spoil with the strong;* the magnificency and importance of which things do well agree to the Messas, but not to any other person: whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a Messias, they had as much reason to apply this place to him as any other, and to acknowledge he was to be a great sufferer; and indeed divers of the ancient Targumists and most learned Rabbins did expound this place of the one Messias that was to come, as the Pugio Fidei and other learned writers do by several testimonies show. This place also discovers the vanity of that figment devised by some later Jews, who, to evade and oppose Jesus, affirmed there was to be a double Messias (one who should be much afflicted, the other who should greatly prosper), since we may observe that here both great afflictions and glorious performances are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are also by parts clearly predicted in other places of this prophet, and in other scriptures: by Isaiah again in the chapter immediately foregoing; *Behold* (saith he) *my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high,*[q] (there is God's servant (he that is in way of excellency such, that is, in this prophet's style, the Messias) in his real glorious capacity; it follows, concerning his external appearance), *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:* and again, in the 49th chapter, *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.*[r] What can be more express and clear, than that the Messias, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and adoration of himself, was to be despised by men, to be detested by the Jews, and to appear in a servile and base condition? The same prophet again brings him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*[s] His offending the Jews and aggravating their sins is also expressed by this same prophet: *And* (saith he) *he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*[t] The opposition also he should receive is signified in the 2d Psalm: *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.*[u] The prophet Zechariah doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings: his low condition in those words; *Behold, thy king cometh unto thee lowly* (*pauper*) *and riding upon an ass:*[v] his manner of death in those: *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;*[w] and again; *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn,*[x] &c. The prophet Daniel, also, in that place, from which probably the name Messias was

[p] Isa. lii. 7, 13.
[q] Isa. lii. 13, 14.
[r] Isa. xlix. 7.
[s] Isa. l. 6.
[t] Isa. viii. 14.
[u] Psal. ii. 2.
[v] Zech. ix. 9.
[w] Zech. xiii. 7.
[x] Zech. xii. 10.

taken, and which most expressly mentions him, saith, that *after threescore and two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself.*[y] Now, from these passages of scripture, we may well say with our Lord, [z]*Οτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν*[a] *That thus it was written, and thus*, according to the prophet's foretelling, it was to happen, that the *Messias should suffer:*[z] suffer in a life of penury and contempt, in a death of shame and sorrow.

That it was to be thus, might also be inferred by reasons grounded on the qualities of the Messias's person, and the nature of his performances, such as they are described in the scripture. He was to be really, and to appear plainly, a person of most admirable virtue and good worth; but never was there or can be any such (as even pagan philosophers, Plato, Seneca, and others, have observed) without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts (especially to the greatest part, that is, to the poor), of all righteousness; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty (humility, patience, meekness, charity, self-denial, entire resignation to God's will;) this he should not have opportunity or advantage of doing, if his condition had been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous. He was to exercise pity and sympathy towards all mankind; the which to do, it was requisite he should feel the inconveniences and miseries incident to mankind. He was to advance the repute of spiritual and eternal goods; and to depress the value of those corporeal and temporal things, which men vainly admire; the most ready and compendious way of doing this was by an exemplary neglecting and refusing worldly enjoyments (the honours, profits, and pleasures here.) He was by gentle and peaceable means to erect a spiritual kingdom, to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God, to raise in men the hopes of future rewards and blessings in heaven; to the accomplishment of which purposes, temporal glory had been rather prejudicial than conducible. He was to manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would be more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was to merit most highly from God for himself and for men; this he could not do so well, as in enduring for God's sake and ours the hardest things. He was to save men, and consequently to appease God's wrath and satisfy his justice, by the expiation of our sins; this required that he should suffer what we had deserved. But reasons of this kind I partly before touched, and shall hereafter have occasion to prosecute more fully in treating upon the article of our Saviour's passion.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared concerning the Messias, we need not by relating minutely the known history of his life and death make out further; since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary will deny it. I conclude this point with St. Peter's words (for the illustration and proof of which this Discourse hath been made:) *But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*[z]

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

JOHN v. 37.—*And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.*

JESUS, our Lord, here and in the context doth affirm, that Almighty God, his Father had granted unto him several kinds of extraordinary attestation, sufficient to convince all well-disposed persons, unto whom they shall be discovered, that he truly was that Messias, whom God before all beginning of time had designed, and frequently by his prophets had promised to send for the reformation of the world and salvation of mankind: to represent those several ways of divine attestation, with some reflections on them, serving

[y] Dan. ix. 26. [z] Luke xxiv. 26. [a] Acts iii. 18.

both to the confirmation of our faith, and improving our affection and our reverence thereto, is my chief design at this time.

But first, in preparation to what we shall say concerning those particulars, and for declaration of the divine wisdom in this manner of proceeding, I shall assign some reasons why it was requisite that such attestations should be afforded to our Lord.

I. The nature of the Messias's office required such attestations; for since he was designed to the most eminent employment that ever was or could be committed to any person; since he was to reveal things no less great and important, than new and strange; since he was to assume a most high authority unto himself; since he was to speak and act all in the name of God; since also all men under great penalties were obliged to yield credit and obedience to him, there was great reason that God should appear to authorize him;[a] that he should be able to produce God's hand and seal to his commission; for that otherwise he might have been suspected of imposture; his doctrine might have been rejected, his authority disclaimed, and his design frustrated, without great blame, or however without men's being convincible of blame: for well might the people suspect that person, who, professing to come in such a capacity an extraordinary agent from heaven, brought no credentials thence (no evidence of God's especial favour and assistance;) well might they reject that new doctrine which God vouchsafed not by any signal testimony to countenance; well might they disclaim that authority, which offering to introduce so great innovations (to repeal old laws, to cancel settled obligations, to abolish ancient customs, to enact new laws and rules, exacting obedience to them from all men), should not be able to exhibit its warrant, and show its derivation from heaven;[b] well might such peremptory assertions and so confident pretences, without confirmations answerable in weight, beget even in wise men distrust and aversation. The reasonableness and excellency of his doctrine, the innocence and sanctity of his life, the wisdom and persuasiveness of his discourse, would not, if nothing more divine should attend them, be thoroughly able to procure faith and submission; they would at best have made his precepts to pass for the devices of a wise man, or the dictates of a good philosopher. They were, therefore, no unreasonable desires or demands (if they had proceeded from a good meaning, and had been joined with a docile and tractable disposition) which the Jews did make to our Lord: *Master, we would see a sign from thee; what sign therefore dost thou do, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? what sign dost thou show to us, that thou doest these things?*[c] that is, how dost thou prove thy doctrine credible, or thy authority valid, by God's testimony and warrant? This challenge our Lord himself acknowledged somewhat reasonable; for he not only asserts the truth of his doctrine and validity of his commission by divine attestation (in words and works), nor only exhorts them to credit him upon that account, but he also plainly signifies that his bare affirmation did not require credit, and that if he could produce no better proof, they were excusable for disbelieving him:[d] *If* (saith he) *I witness of myself, my witness is not true;*[e] not true, that is, not credible; or not so true as to oblige to belief: and, *If I do not the works of my Father* (that is, works only imputable to God's extraordinary power), *believe me not;*[f] that is, I require no belief from you: yea, he further adds, *If I had not done the works among them, which no man else had done, they* (the incredulous people then) *had not had any sin;*[g] that is, had not been culpable for unbelief. It was, then, from the nature of the Messias's office and undertaking, very necessary that he should have attestations of this kind; and our Lord himself, we see, declines not, but aggravateth his pretences with this necessity.

2. The effects which the Messias was to produce did require extraordinary attestations and assistances from God. He was to achieve exploits of the greatest

[a] Deut. xviii. 19; Acts iii. 23.
[b] John vi. 27.
[c] John ii. 18; vi. 30; Matt. xii. 28; xvi. 1; Mark viii. 12.
[d] John viii. 16, 29; x. 25; v. 32, 36.
[e] John v. 31.
[f] John x. 37.
[g] John xv. 24.

difficulty conceivable; far surpassing all that ever was by any person undertaken in the world before: he was to vanquish all the powers, and to confound all the policies of hell; he was to subdue and subjugate all the world; to make the greatest princes to stoop, and to submit their sceptres to his will;* to bring down the most haughty conceits, and to break down the most stubborn spirits, and to tame the wildest passions of men; he was to expel from their minds most deeply-rooted prejudices, to banish from their practice most inveterate customs, to cross their most violent humours, to thwart their interests, to bare down their ambitions, to restrain their covetous desires and their voluptuous appetites; he was to persuade a doctrine, and to impose a law, very opposite to the natural inclinations, to the current notions, to the worldly advantages, the liberties, emoluments, and enjoyments of all, or of most, or of many people; he was, in short, so to reform the world, as in a manner quite to alter the whole frame of it, and all the course of affairs therein; things which surely it were a madness to enterprise, and an impossibility to accomplish, without remarkable testimonies of the divine presence, especial aids of the divine power, and large influences of the divine Spirit communicated to him; without, as St. Peter phraseth it, *God were with him*;[h] these things were not effectible by means natural and ordinary, by human wit or eloquence, by good behaviour or example, by the bare reason or plausibility of doctrine, by the wise conduct or industrious management of the design: no, such means have by many experiments appeared insufficient to bring about much lesser matters; nothing under the wisdom of God directing, the power of God assisting, the authority of God establishing and gracing his endeavours in an eminent and evident manner, could enable the Messias to bring these mighty things so pass.

3. We may further consider that *the Christ* was designed to present himself first to the Jews (in the first place imparting the declarations of God's will and gracious intentions to them, his ancient friends and favourites;) that is, to a people wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and uncapable of conviction by any other: they did not, as did *the Greeks, seek wisdom*, but *required a sign*,[i] as St. Paul observed of them; they were not so apt to inquire after the intrinsic reasons of things, as to expect testimonies from heaven; nothing else was able to persuade them; so our Lord expressly saith: *Jesus said unto them, If you do not see signs and prodigies, you will nowise believe*:[j] in consequence of which disposition in them, we see by passages in the New Testament, that they expected and believed the Messias should come with such attestations and performances; so their importunate demanding of signs upon all occasions from our Lord doth signify, and so those words in St. John do imply: *And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these, which this man doeth*?[k] where we may observe both their expectation of miraculous works from the Messias, and the efficacy which such works had upon them. The condition also of the Gentiles, unto whom his design in the next place did extend, seemed to require the same proceeding:[l] for all other methods of instruction and persuasion had before often been applied to them by philosophers and by politicians for instilling their notions and recommending their laws; they had been so inured to subtile argumentations and plausible discourses, that the bare use of them was not likely to have any extraordinary effect upon them: if the Messias therefore should bring no other confirmation with him unto them, he would seem to deserve no higher regard or credit then other doctors or lawgivers which had appeared among them; and as easily would he be declined, and put off by them; whence reasonably it may be supposed, that for accommodation, to the genius and the capacities of those upon whose hearts he was to make impression, the Messias should come furnished with such special testimonials and powers from God. Especially considering that,

* Ἀνάπτυξον τῇ διανοίᾳ, καὶ ἐννόησον ἡλίκον ἐστὶ τὴν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ κειμένην ἅπασαν, &c.—Chrys. tom. vi. Or. lxi. p. 634.

[h] Acts x. 38; John iii. 2.

[i] 1 Cor. i. 22.

[j] John iv. 48.

[k] John vii. 31.

[l] Orig. cont. Cels. viii. (p. 408)

4. It was agreeable to God's usual method of proceeding in cases resembling this, although much unequal thereto in weight and consequence. There was never any more than ordinary discovery made to men by God, never any very considerable business managed by divine Providence, never hardly any eminent person appeared with a pretence of coming from God for the prosecution of such purposes, without God's visible interposal and abetment. This hath always been the authentic seal, whereby he hath wonted to authorize the messengers sent from himself for transacting affairs of an unusual and very weighty nature:[m] whereby his true ambassadors have been distinguishable from ordinary persons, or from deceitful pretenders, who have offered to impose their own devices upon men: to a person bringing with him this sort of assurance (except when his tale is evidently false and vain, or his design notoriously wicked and mischievous) God hath always required, that a ready credence and obedience should be yielded; taking it for a high affront to himself (no less, as St. John says, than *giving him the lie*) to disbelieve such a person, and for a heinous contumacy to disobey him: that it hath been God's ordinary method, the course of divine history shows.[n] When God separated the patriarchs for the preservation and propagation of his true religion, he manifested an especial presence with them, frequently appearing to them visibly assisting and blessing them in a more than ordinary manner, enduing them with a prophetical discretion and fore-sight of things:[o] when he would rescue the seed of those his friends from cruel oppression and hard slavery (designing also by them to maintain and convey down the sincere way of piety), he imparted also unto Moses, the especial instrument of those purposes, a power of doing wonders, thereby procuring authority to his person, and credit to his pretences. Moses did well perceive and judge, that had he come without such attestation he should not have been received or regarded: *But, behold* (said he), *they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee:*[p] wherefore God furnished him with such a power of doing such things as should assure the truth of his message: the effect whereof is thus expressed; *Israel saw that great work, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses:*[q] to the promulgation of the law, and establishment of that particular covenant with the Israelites, God did also exhibit significations of his presence in a most evident and affecting manner: *Lo* (said God to Moses, expressing that matter and its design) *I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.*[r] And in the whole conduct of that people toward Canaan, God for those ends vouchsafed by Moses to perform very great and prodigious things; which we may see reckoned up in the 78th and 105th Psalms, and in the 9th of Nehemiah.[s] So also, when God employed Elias to sustain the remaiders of decayed piety in Israel against the countenance of power given to wickedness, and against the stream of popular use, he endued him with a liberal measure of his Spirit, and a power of doing great miracles: the like may be observed of all the prophets, judges, and princes, who upon special occasions were raised to perform considerable services for the glory of God and the good of his people.

This therefore being God's constant practice, it cannot but be well supposed, that in this case he would not withhold his attestation, but would afford it in a most plentiful measure to that person who was in dignity so far to excel all other his envoys and agents; whose undertaking should in importance so vastly transcend all others that ever were set on foot in the world; to him, who was to free, not one small people only, but all mankind, not from a temporal slavery in Egypt, but from eternal misery in hell; to promulge, not a pedagogy of ritual observances, but a law of spiritual righteousness; to establish, not a temporal covenant for a little spot of earth, but an

[m] John vi. 27.
[n] 1 John v. 10; John iii. 33.
[o] Gen. xxi. 22.
[p] Exod. iv. 1.
[q] Exod. iv. 5. 31; xiv. 31; Deut. iv. 34; v. 15; vii. 19; iv. 35. 39.
[r] Exod. xix. 9; Neh. ix. 13.
[s] Psal. lxxviii. 14; cv. 39; Neh. ix. 15.

everlasting testament for all the world, importing endless beatitude in heaven. God, therefore, surely would not balk his road upon such an occasion, nor refuse his especial testimonials to so great a personage, and to so good a design.

5. If we consider the general reasons assignable, why God hath been wont to proceed in this manner, or why he should use it upon any occasion, they are with strongest force applicable to this case. The most general reasons why God doth ever interpose extraordinarily, or produce works supernatural, are, to assert palpably his own divinity and providence; strongly to encourage devotion and piety in men; for he by suspending or thwarting the course of nature plainly declareth himself the maker and master thereof; that he freely made the world, and freely doth uphold it; that he hath not tied his own hands, nor confined his power within limits; but is superior to and free from all laws, excepting those of indefectible holiness and goodness; and consequently that all things do not proceed in a track of dead fatality. He thereby also assureth us, that he hath an especial regard unto and a care over men, and wisely ordereth human affairs by his providence, frequently (as wisdom directeth and occasion requireth) interposing his hand for the succour, encouragement, and reward of good men; that therfore it is not vain to hope and trust in him; that prayers and devotions are available to procure good from him; that repentance and obedience are no less profitable for us, than acceptable to him; that also he freely and justly dispenseth recompenses suitable to men's actions voluntarily performed; that, in fine, there is a foundation of religion, and a ground of justice between God and man: these things are most evidently and effectually demonstrated by extraordinary attestations; and when, therefore, could they more seasonably be used, than when God by the Messias intended to call all the world to the acknowledgment and obedience of himself, to the practice of all piety and goodness, with assurances of fit reward in regard to such practice? If further to excite men's attention and regard, to breed awe and reverence in men's minds, to confound the impudence, and to bend or break the obstinacy of men, are main ends and proper effects of such testimonies; whether we consider the Messias's person, the nature of his undertaking, or the persons with whom he was to deal, it is plain (as we have showed) that his business would best deserve and most need them: no dispensation could better deserve them for worth and consequence; none could more need them for greatness and difficulty.

Such reasons may be assigned for the necessity and usefulness of divine attestations in this case: but in opposition to these discourses, and in derogation to this way of confirming any truth or authority, it may be said, that no such testifications can well serve to such purposes; for that the like have been and may be applied to the persuasion of error and impiety by *false prophets* and *antichrists*, by *magicians* and *wizards;* who not only have cunningly counterfeited, but really executed very prodigious and wondrous things, in a manner unacountable to human philosophy.[t] Since also there are wicked spirits, in subtilty and power far exceeding us, who are able easily to divert the natural course of things; and the limits of whose power in working so, it is hard for us to discern or define; how can we be assured that what is done in this kind doth not proceed from them, but from a virtue divine?* how can it be a certain and convincing argument of truth? may we not here object that of Tertullian, saying, that *our Lord pronouncing that many impostors should come, and do miracles, showed thereby the faith grounded on miracles to be temeracious.*†

To this suggestion we may in general return, that seeing the doing such things is the chief and most effectual way whereby God, beyond the resistance of doubt or dispute, can in some cases assure us concerning his mind and will[u] (whereby he can bestow honour and credit to any instrument employed by

* Πῶς οὖν οὐ σχέτλιον ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων τὸν μὲν Θεὸν, τοὺς δὲ γοήτας ἡγεῖσθαι; Cels. apud Orig. lib. ii. p. 89.

† Siquidem edicens multos venturos, et signa facturos, temerariam plane signorum et virtutum fidem ostendit, ut apud pseudo-christianos facillimarum.—*Tert. in Marc.* iii. 2.

[t] Deut. xiii. 30; Matt. xxiv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 2.

[u] Aug. de Civ. Dei, x. 16.

him, to any revelation proceeding from him), it cannot but (notwithstanding that cross instance) reasonably be supposed, that God however doth reserve the power thereof in some eminent and discernible manner peculiar to himself, for the promoting his own service. That also, at least, God being the author and establisher of nature, and the continual sustainer of it by his free providence, it is not likely that he will suffer the laws and course thereof to be much violated, except upon occasions very considerable, and for very good purposes; no inferior cause being able to determine his voluntary influence or providential concourse to the accomplishment of designs contrary to his will and purpose. That also the natural goodness and justice of God, the constant care and providence he exerciseth over this world, the particular relations he beareth toward mankind (as the Maker and Father, the Lord and Governor thereof), the honour and interest of truth, of religion, of virtue (whose protector and patron he is, and declareth himself), the necessary regard he also, in connexion with the rest, doth bear to his own honour and glory, do all conspire to persuade, that God will never endure such things to be performed in any high manner, so that good and well-meaning people shall be very liable to be thereby extremely seduced into error; or that himself shall be intolerably mocked by the enemies of his glory and our good. This may serve to render it probable that the objection is capable of a solution.

But to answer more distinctly and particularly; we do grant, that God sometimes for special reasons (for wise probation of some persons and just punishment of others; for to approve some men's sincerity and constancy, to detect other men's naughtiness and vanity) may permit such things (in some manner, in some degree such) to be effected by the influence of wicked spirits, or the fraud of wicked men; yet then it will never be very hard for moderately wise and well-disposed persons to distinguish such feats from those acts which issue from the positive and direct efficacy of God, for authorising his messengers and confirming his truth:[v] we may usually discern them to come from bad causes by their nature; we may certainly detect them by their design and influence.

There are some things so great, that it is not reasonable to conceive that any such inferior power is able to do them; or, if they were able, that God should permit their power actually to be exerted, and to succeed in doing them: such is the making any general or grand alteration in the course of nature; which being God's great work and establishment, the which he doth, as the prophets speak, govern by a standing law, and preserve according to a perpetual decree, which cannot pass;[w] yea, according to a covenant, which his faithfulness is in a manner engaged to observe; it is not probable that he will suffer any creature to disturb or disorder: this experience well confirmeth; for had bad spirits a power of crossing nature so, such is their malice and proneness to do mischief, that the world would soon have been turned by them into confusion and ruin; that all things therein go in so kindly and steady a course, is an argument of their small power and influence upon things; that God holdeth the reins fast in his own hands, reserving to himself only as Lord paramount of nature a power to dispense with any of its main laws; that it is *he alone who* (as the Psalmist saith) *doeth great wonders.*[x] There are also some things, which although not of so great and general consequence, are yet of so difficult performance, that it is improbable any creature should effect them; such was the turning of dust into lice, which the devils could not enable the Egyptian sorcerers to perform; to prepare or dispose so much dust for the reception of souls, and to furnish so many souls for the dust, did, it seems exceed their ability; whence they were forced to confess of that miracle done by Moses, *This is the finger of God.*[y]

There are also things so good, and so beneficial to mankind, that evil spirits may be deemed unable to do them (God, the fountain of good, retaining them as instruments of his glory, and arguments of his goodness, to his own dispensation),

[v] 1 Cor. xi. 19; 2 Thess. ii. 9, 11; Deut. xiii. 1, &c.; Matt. xxiv. 24; Rev. xiii. 13.

[w] Jer. v. 22; xxxiii. 25; Psal. cxlviii. 26.

[x] Psal. cxxxvi. 4; lxxii. 18; lxxxvi. 10; Deut. iii. 24.

[y] Exod. viii. 19.

which also we may presume they would not be willing, were they able, to perform, it being against their disposition or their interest to do it; such are, to dispossess devils (that is, to divide and weaken their own kingdom;) to discover moral truths of consequence (that is, to drive men from themselves;) and even to free men from grievous diseases (that is, to starve their own ἐπιχαιρεκακια, and malignity;) as is implied in that passage of the gospel, where it is said, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil: Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?*[a] Extraordinary works, then, if they are very great, very hard, very good, do thence indicate their cause to be divine: wicked spirits deal only in petty, low, and useless prestigiatory tricks, of small consequence, and no benefit.

But there are further some things infallibly signifying a divine virtue, peculiar to God, and (either by their nature or from the decree of God) incommunicable to any creature, otherwise than as acted by God, or immediately depending on him: such are, the knowledge of future contingent events declared by predicting or presignifying them, according to that of the prophet; *Show* (said he, in way of challenge and conviction to the objects of heathen worship) *the things to come, that we may know ye are Gods:*[a] such is the discerning men's secret thoughts and intentions, the which God assumeth as proper to himself; *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins;* so that καρδιογνώστης is a characteristical attribute, or title, proper to him.[b] Such is the restitution of men from a state of death to life; a work not only in itself most difficult, in repect to the ordinary rule of nature, which it transgresseth, but impossible to any mere creature, without God's aid; for that the souls of men when they die return into God's hand, and enter into a state determined by his high sentence; whence no creature can fetch them down, or raise them up; most impossible also, because God by especial decree hath reserved the power of doing it appropriate to himself; the power of life and death being his prerogative, who saith, *I am he, and there is no God beside me;** *I kill, and I make alive:* of whom again it is said, *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*[c] He it is that in his hand doth *hold the keys of hell and of death.*[d] The performing things also by mere word and will, without application of other force, or any preparation of the subject-matter (being equivalent to the work of creation), is peculiar unto God, the author of all being, or to such as act by the immediate help of his infinite power.

We may add, that there also seem to be some things which infernal spirits (who continue under restraint and command, within a great awe and dread of their Judge) dare not so much as pretend to or counterfeit; knowing that as presently they shall be checked in their attempt, so they shall be grievously chastised for their presumptions:[e] such may be the assuming to themselves the special names of God, the directly withstanding the extraordinary messengers of God, and the like.

So, even considering the very nature of strange works may enable us to distinguish them; but the end and design of such works, together with the influences and effects of them, will further ascertain us of their original: if they are done to abet any gross error, or to promote any mischievous purpose; if they manifestly do seduce to apostacy from God or goodness; if they naturally tend to the production of impiety, iniquity, or impurity; if they do not necessarily produce any great disorder or disturbance in the world, assuredly hell is the source of them; they derive from him whose kingdom and interest they advance; by their fruits we may know the tree from which they grow. If also they discover ostentation and vanity in the actors, or serve only to gratify idle humour and curiosity in the spectators of them, tending otherwise to no good purpose; it is easy to collect whence they spring; that they come from the father both of mischiefs and vanities, who not only delights to abuse us with villainies, but to

[a] John x. 21. [a] Isa. xli. 23.
[b] Jer. xvii. 10; xi. 20; xx. 12; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Psal. vii. 9; Acts i. 24; xv. 8.

* Πλὴν ἐμοῦ,—1 Sam. ii. 6.
[c] Deut. xxxii. 39. [d] Rev. i. 18.
[e] Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; Luke viii. 28.

amuse us also with trifles and fond superstitions.

As (saith Origen) *the power of those enchantments in Egypt was not, in itself, like to that admirable power by God's grace vouchsafed to Moses; so the end did convince those Egyptian feats to be jugglings, those of Moses to be divine.** The portentous things done *by the energy of Satan*, are, as St. Paul calleth them, *τέρατα ψεύδους*, either false prodigies, or prodigies abetting falsehood and vanity.[f]

But the works of the most wise and good God, as they are commonly works of wonderful majesty and grandeur, incomparable and inimitable for difficulty: so they always are holy, always useful; they ever aim at good ends, and produce wholesome fruits: hence we may discern them, and hence we are obliged to acknowledge them; they afford us ground to say with the Psalmist, *Unto thee, O Lord, we do give thanks; for that thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare.*[g] Such works, as they can only be effects of God's power, so they are arguments of his truth; for that he cannot lend his hand, for that he will not prostitute his assistance to the maintenance of any thing which is not perfectly true and good; he will *not so tempt any man* into error. *If I by the finger of God cast out devils, then indeed is the kingdom of God come unto you,*[h] (that is, if I perform works by the divine power, then assuredly is my doctrine true), was an irrefragable argument.

We may also observe, that those wicked spirits are themselves apprehensive how easily their feats are distinguished from the works of God; for hence, it seems, they chose to utter them clandestinely, in obscure corners, in blind times, among barbarous and silly people; judging that persons of any wisdom or goodness will be soon able to detect them, and ready to explode them: a little light dazzles *the powers of darkness*, and scares away these spectres; a little goodness mates their force, enfeebleth and dishearteneth them.

We may also add, that the Messias's works by a peculiar character should be manifestly distinguishable from such as proceeded from infernal powers; for that it should be his business to impugn, defeat, and overthrow the devil's kingdom; all the falsehoods and superstitions, all the immoralities and impieties, which it consisted in, or which supported it: to this end all his doctrine, practice, and performances would conspiringly tend, that *Satan like lightning should be thrown down from heaven;*[i] which most evidently would evince, that what he should do should only come from heaven.

Having thus showed reasons why, and signified to what purposes, the Messias was to receive special testimonies from God; let us now survey those which were indeed by him exhibited to Jesus our Lord. There is indeed no kind or degree of attestation needful or proper, which hath not been largely from heaven afforded to him. God (so our Lord argueth) is in his own nature invisible and indiscernible to any sense of ours; neither could we endure the lustre of his immediate presence.[j] (*No man ever saw God, or can see him; there shall no man see him and live.*[k]) It must be therefore by mediation of signs and works supernatural, the causing of which can only be imputed to him, as beyond the power of any creature to effect or counterfeit, that he can assuredly signify his mind unto us; such only in approbation of any person, law, or doctrine, can be expected from him; and such, in divers kinds, and in great measures, God hath, we say, *furnished for the authorising Jesus.*

1. God did attest to him long before his coming into the world, by presignifying and predicting concerning him, at several times, in several ways, by several persons (even by all the prophets and eminent persons among his people of old), many things, even all things considerable about him; in exact congruity to the circumstances of his coming into the world (the time when, the place where, the family whence, the manner how, the condition in which he was born), to the qualities of his person, to the doctrine

* Ὡς γὰρ οὐχ ὁμοία δύναμις ἡ τῶν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐπωδῶν τῇ ἐν τῷ Μωυσῇ παραδόξῳ χάριτι, ἀλλὰ τὸ τέλος διέλεγχε τὰ μὲν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ὄντα μαγγανείας.—Orig. in Cels. 2.

[f] 2 Thess. ii. 9.
[g] Psal. lxxv. 1.
[h] James i. 13; Luke xi. 20.
[i] Luke x. 18.
[j] John. v. 36, 37.
[k] 1 Tim. vi. 16; Exod. xxxiii. 20.

and law which he published, to all his undertakings and performances and sufferings, and to the successes consequent upon what he did. (This is a matter of very large consideration; which otherwhile we have insisted largely upon, and therefore shall now waive enlargement on it.)

2. God did in attestation to him immediately send before his face, as his herald and harbinger, a Prophet, or one for his admirable wisdom and sanctity of life somewhat *more than a prophet*;[l] who indeed without doing any miracle, by the prodigious integrity and strictness of his life, by the wonderful afficacy of his doctrine and discourse, procured unto himself a reputation equalling or exceeding that of any former prophet (whom even Josephus, an indifferent historian, reporteth a man of singular goodness and great authority), to predispose the minds of men to receive him; by converting men to a serious reflection upon their lives and amendment of their manners, to *prepare his way*; as also to point him out, to foretell of him as presently coming, to testify of him as being come. This was he, to whom it well agreed, and who plainly did assume to himself that which was written by Malachi, *Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee*;[m] of whom Isaiah (John himself being the avoucher and interpreter) said, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight*;[n] who was, as Malachi did again signify, *to come in the spirit and power of Elias, to convert the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*[o] This most extraordinary and excellent person did at several times and occasions attest unto Jesus, not only that he was incomparably, for the dignity of his person and worth of his performances, to be preferred before himself, and consequently before all other prophets,[p] but that he was the *very Christ*, the *Lamb of God*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world; they sent to John* (saith the text), *and he bare witness to the truth.*[q] God by him also foretold divers things concerning our Lord, which did really come to pass; as those words, uttered occasionally by many persons, do imply: *John indeed did no miracle; but all things which John spake of this man were true.*[r]

3. God attested unto our Lord by visible apparitions from heaven, at several times, in fit seasons, made in the sight and presence of very good witnesses: angels appearing warned his good father and blessed mother concerning the time and manner of his coming into the world;[s] angels again appearing uttered tidings of his birth, joined with acclamations of praise to God, and gratulations of joy to men; angels were vigilant for his safety, ministered unto him in his temptations and needs, assisted and comforted him in the agonies of his passion, waited upon him at his resurrection; an extraordinary star (like that of the morning before the sun) officiously did usher him into the world; at his baptism the *Holy Ghost* (in the symbolical figure of a dove) appeared *descending, and resting upon him*, in the presence of St. John the Baptist (that most just and holy person, so taken and acknowledged by all men, even by his enemies and murderers;[t] and a most competent witness, as who dared with utmost peril before the greatest persons to assert the truth;) *He testified thereof, and said, I saw the Spirit of God descending from heaven as a dove, and resting upon him.*[u] Moses and Elias also (those most eminent instruments of God, and illustrious representatives of the Messias) did from heaven in a most glorious and splendid manner attend upon him, in the presence of three most credible witnesses, Peter, James, and John, the apostles; one of whom doth himself thus, with the due confidence of an eye-witness, report the fact: *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord*

[l] Matt. xi. 10; John x. 41.
[m] Mal. iii. 1; Matt. xi. 10.
[n] Isa. xl. 3; John i. 23.
[o] Mal. iv. 6; Luke i. 17.
[p] John i. 15, 26, 29, 34; Matt. iii. 11; Luke iii. 16.
[q] John v. 33.
[r] John x. 41.
[s] Matt. i. 20, 24; Luke i. 26; ii. 9, &c.
[t] Matt. ii. 13; iv. 11; Luke xxii. 43; Matt. iii. 17; Luke iii. 22.
[u] John i. 31.

Jesus Christ, but were spectators of his majesty—being with him in the holy mountain.[v]

4. God also by vocal attestation did expressly at several times own and approve Jesus: at his baptism, in the audience of St. John the Baptist and others present there; when, *Behold there was a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:*[w] the like heavenly voice was heard at the transfiguration; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him:* so the gospels report it;[x] and thus St. Peter himself, a more immediate witness and attendant there; *He received from God the Father honour and glory, a voice being brought unto him from the magnificent glory; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard, being with him in the holy mount.*[y] Again, a little before his death, in presence of a multitude, upon Jesus's prayer that God would by him glorify his name, an audible return was made from heaven; *There came* (saith the text) *a voice from heaven,* saying, *I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it.*[z]

5. God attested to our Lord, in that he was endued with a power constantly resident in him of performing miraculous works, for nature and quality such as could only proceed from a most divine power; not only thwarting the course of nature, but transcending the strength of any creature, and especially contrary to what any evil creature could or would perform: this was a testimony beyond any human testimony, and which our Lord insisted upon as such; *I* (saith he) *have a greater testimony than that of John; for the works which the Father hath granted me, that I should perform them, those very works which I do, they testify about me, that the Father hath sent me.*[a]

Works indeed he performed of a stupenduous greatness and difficulty; all the creatures (the most unruly and boisterous, the most malignant and rebellious) beside their natures, and against their wills, did obey his commands: in a tempest *he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there became a great calm: so that men did marvel, saying, What manner of man is this, for even the winds and the sea obey him!* The sea stood firm for him and St. Peter to walk upon; he turned water into good wine; he unconceivably so improved a few loaves and little fishes as to feed and satisfy multitudes, leaving more behind than there were at first;[b] he cured the most incurable diseases, inveterate palsies, fluxes of blood, and leprosies; he restored senses, and limbs wanting from the birth, or for a long time; innumerable persons, blind, deaf, dumb, lame, and maimed, he restored to the use of their faculties, and members respectively, without any medicinal applications, or any natural means conducible to those purposes: he restored lunatic persons to their right wits, and dispossessed evil spirits, they not daring to disobey him, and acknowledging his uncontrollable authority; *They were* (saith the text) *amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.*[c] These were indeed works of excessive grandeur and difficulty; but he did others far more great and hard; and these were greater for the manner of performing them, than in their own nature: he did other acts so great, that they were only to be done by an infinite power; and most of these he performed in a manner which argued omnipotency present with the doer.

Works proper unto God he did many; such was discerning the thoughts, reasonings, opinions, and purposes of men, however concealed or disguised, whereof we have many instances;[d] and his intimate acquaintance, St. John, testifies of him generally, saying, *He needed not that any should witness about a man, for he knew himself what was in man.*[e]

[v] Matt. xvii. 5; Luke ix. 28, 31; 2 Pet. i. 16.
[w] Matt. iii. 17; Luke iii. 22.
[x] Matt. xvii. 5; Luke ix. 35; Mark ix. 7.
[y] 2 Pet. i. 17. [z] John xii. 28.
[a] John v. 36; x. 25, 38; xiv. 11.

[b] Matt. viii. 26; Luke viii. 24, 25; Matt. xiv. 26; John vi. 19; ii. 9; iv. 52; ix. 1; Matt. viii. 6; ix. 2, 20, 32; viii. 3; xii. 12; xv. 30; xx. 34; Mark ix. 5.
[c] Matt. xvii. 29; Mark i 27.
[d] Matt. ix. 4; xii. 25; xxii. 18; Luke xi. 17; vi. 8. [e] John ii. 25.

Such was also to forgive sins (a privilege only belonging to the supreme Lord and Lawgiver, against whom sin is committed;) the which he assumed to himself, and irreproveably maintained it by exerting a power equivalent thereto; *For whether* (said he) *is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk? but that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy) Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thine house: and he arose, and departed to his house.*[f] Such it was likewise to foretell future contingencies: this he often did; as concerning his own passion and resurrection, with all the circumstances of them; particularly the treason of Judas (*He knew*, saith St. John, *from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who it was that should betray him:*[g]) concerning St. Peter's lapse, repentance, and suffering; concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and utter demolishment of the temple; concerning the persecutions which his disciples should undergo; concerning the communication of the Holy Ghost after his decease, and the propagation of the gospel in the world: such was the foundation of the church upon a rock, against which *the gates of hell should not prevail.* Such again it was to raise the dead, which he often performed: he raised the ruler's daughter, and the widow's son of Naim, and his friend Lazarus;[h] and *The dead are raised*, is reckoned among the ordinary miracles done by him, in the answer to St. John the Baptist's disciples: these were acts of divine power, which no creature, unassisted by God, could perform.[i]

And considering the manner of performance, such were both these and most of the rest; they in that respect emulating God's inimitable work of creation, and in a manner seeming to exceed it; for that it seemeth harder to produce things out of matter indisposed and repugnant, than to bring them out of mere nothing: as God by mere word and will created things, when *he spake, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast;*[j] so did Jesus in like manner, by the efficacy of his command, or by actions equipollent thereto, without predisposing the subjacent matter, or using any natural instrument, accomplish his great and strange works: *He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, be still;*[k] so he quelled the storm: *I will, be thou cleansed;*[l] so he cured the leper: *Young man, I say unto thee, Arise;* so he revived the widow's son: *O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee as thou desirest:*[m] so he cured the Canaanitish woman's possessed daughter: *He cried out, Lazarus, come forth;* καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ τεθνηκώς, so the *dead man* heard his voice, and presently *came forth* out of the grave;[n] he said, *Ephphatha, be opened,*[o] to the deaf man's ears; they immediately heard, and obeyed: he said but one word, Ἀνάβλεψον, *See again*, to the blind man; καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψε, *and without more ado he saw again:* he did but *chide the* great *fever*, with which St. Peter's mother-in-law was troubled, *and it left her:*[p] he did but take the ruler's daughter by the hand, and *the girl revived and rose up:*[q] he only touched the two blind men's eyes, and so *their sight was restored:* the woman, who had a flux of blood for twelve years, did but touch him, καὶ ἰάθη παραχρῆμα, *and she* thereupon *ipso facto instantly was healed:*[r] yea, multitudes of sick persons together did only endeavour to *touch the hem of his garment, and as many as touched it were healed; there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.*[s] When he used any thing like means, he, as St. Chrysostom[t] observeth, proceeded in ways not only preternatural, but contrary to nature; as when he cured the blind man in St. John's Gospel, anointing his eyes with clay and spittle: διὰ πράγματος ἐπιτείνοντος τὴν πήρωσιν, ἀνεῖλε· *by a thing apt to increase* (or stregthen) *blind-*

[f] Matt. ix. 5.
[g] Matt. xvii. 12; xvi. 21; xx. 17; xxiv. 2, 9; x. 17; xxviii. 20; Luke xxiv. 27, 29; John vi. 64.
[h] Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61, p. 634, 638, ; Matt. ix. 25; Luke vii. 12; John xi. 1, &c.
[i] Luke vii. 22.
[j] Psal. xxxiii. 9.
[k] Mark iv. 39.
[l] Luke v. 12.
[m] Luke vii. 14; Matt. xv. 28.
[n] John xi. 43.
[o] Mark vii. 34.
[p] Luke iv. 39.
[q] Matt. ix. 25.
[r] Matt. ix. 29; Luke viii. 43, 47; Matt. ix. 22.
[s] Matt. xiv. 36; Luke vi. 19.
[t] Chrys. in 1 Cor. i. 22.

ness, he took it away.[u] So great in nature, so high for manner of performance, were the works of our Lord; they plainly were either the works, or they were done in the way of omnipotency.

They had also no less of goodness than of greatness divine: they were all of them plainly works of piety, or works of charity and pity; of a holy nature and beneficial use: they were generally performed upon evidently reasonable occasions, or needs; for the succour and comfort of persons in some want or distress; or for instruction of the minds and reformation of the manners of men; for healing the sick, feeding the hungry, easing the afflicted, restoring men to their senses, freeing them from the Devil's tyranny; for helping men in disappointment and need, or for encouraging kindness and good neighbourhood among people (to which purpose his first miracle done at Cana served:[v]) for instilling or impressing some wholesome truth, as when the fig-tree withered at his command; for encouraging dutiful submission to governors, as when the fish was brought up with a piece of money in his mouth, furnishing him and St. Peter to pay tribute:[w] in fine, the nature and importance of his works St. Peter thus well expressed, saying of him, Ὃς διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν, *Who went about doing good* (or benefiting men), *and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil; for God was with him:*[x] and the evangelist thus; *Jesus went about all the cities, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*[y]

Considering which things, we may well discern by what power and to what purpose Jesus did preform his admirable works; and may repel from our hearts all the cavils or calumnies forged by malicious and vain wits (such as those of Celsus and Julian) in derogation to them; we may particularly perceive how impudently false that suggestion was of the apostate emperor, who said that Jesus, *while he lived, did nothing worthy hearing, except one suppose to heal cripples and blind folk, and to exorcise demoniacs in the villages Bethsaida and Bethany, to be great works:** in opposition to which kind of suggestions, and for abundant confirmation of our purpose, we may consider some advantageous circumstances and concomitances of our Lord's performances.

They were, we may observe, not some few things done at one time, or in one place, among friends and partisans; but innumerably many and frequent (a world of things, more than well could be recited, as St. John telleth us), done through a long course of time (for some years together,[z]) in several places, before all sorts of people, many of them very ill-affected towards him. They *were not done* clancularly *in a blind corner,*[a] among rude and simple people; but openly and visibly every where about Judea, the most lightsome place for knowledge and goodness in the world; where the best worship of God most flourished, and all diabolical impostures were most detested; in the places there most public and conspicuous: so he could affirm and admonish them; *I spake freely to the world; I always taught in the synagogues, and in the temple, where the Jews from all places resort; and in secret have I done nothing:*[b] they were done so apparently, that the people generally saw them, and acknowledged them; that scarce any man could be ignorant of them; that the most learned and considerate men took it for granted that they were done; that adversaries could not deny the performance of them, although out of envy and ill-will they were ready to impute it to the worst causes devisable; that many of all sorts were convinced, and divers converted by them: as for the people, *Great multitudes* (saith St. Matthew, one present, and a follower of our Lord), *came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus's feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the*

[u] John ix. 6.
[v] John ii. 3.
[w] Matt. xxi. 19; xvii. 27.
[x] Acts x. 38.
[y] Matt. ix. 35; iv. 23; xv. 30.

* Ἐργασάμενος παρ' ὃν ἔζη χρόνον οὐδὲν ἀκοῆς ἄξιον, εἰ μή τις οἴεται τοὺς κυλλοὺς, καὶ κωφοὺς ἰᾶσθαι, καὶ τοὺς δαιμονῶντας ἐξορκιζειν ἐν Βεθσαιδᾷ, καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ταῖς κώμαις τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων ε ναι.—Cyr. adv. Jul. lib. 6.

[z] John xxi. 25.
[a] Acts xxvi. 26.
[b] John xviii. 20.

blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel:[c] and, *The people marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel; but the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils by the prince of devils:*[d] the matter of fact they could not offer, against conviction of sense, to question; but malice prompted perversely and foolishly to assign a bad cause thereof: the matter was so notorious, that St. Peter could thus confidently appeal to the whole nation: *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved** (or demonstrated) *unto you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you; as you yourselves know.*[e] The adversaries (such whom superstitious prejudices, obstinate humours, or corrupt affections, envy, pride, ambition, avarice, or the like, had made adversaries to him) did not only see the thing, but were affrighted with its consequence: *The chief priests* (it is said) *and the Pharisees gathered a council together, and said; What shall we do, for this man doeth many wonders? if we let him alone, all men will believe on him:*[f] yes indeed, notwithstanding all this watchful caution and fine policy of theirs, notwithstanding all the opposition and discouragement they could interpose, all their strugglings to smother his credit and doctrine, many were in their hearts convinced, even divers of such as were unwilling to believe, and ashamed or afraid to avow their persuasion: *Also* (it is said again) *of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:*[g] Nicodemus, an honest and ingenuous person, a man of honour (but somewhat wary and timorous), came secretly, and in the name (it seemeth) of many persons alike disposed with himself, thus spake: *Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a teacher from God; for no man can do those things which thou doest, except God be with him.*[h] As for the generality of the people (the most unconcerned in such cases as to point of honour and interest, and thence the most impartial and sincere party), they following their senses were greatly affected and astonished with what he did; taking him for a very extraordinary person; some in a gross and confused manner, others in a more distinct way of belief: *Some said he was John the Baptist; others, that he was Elias; others, Jeremiah, or one of the ancient prophets risen up again: but many of the people* (more fully and exactly) *believed on him, saying, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than this man hath done?*[i]

We may also observe, that Jesus did not affect to perform wonders out of vanity, or to humour men's curiosity, but always upon inducements of piety and charity: most of them were performed occasionally at the desire of men, suggested by their needs; and all of them for their edification or comfort; that he therefore did not seek by them to acquire reputation or applause to himself, nor by them designed to advance any private interest of his own, but singly aimed at the promotion of God's glory in them all; that in effect no secular advantage of dignity or wealth or pleasure did from them accrue to himself, but rather disgrace and obloquy, hatred and enmity, trouble and pain, did from them befall him; all the glory of them purely coming to God, and all the benefit to men. As he charged his disciples, so he practised himself, doing all *gratis*, and freely, without expecting or accepting any requital.[j] He often studiously concealed his miracles, forbidding those who were concerned in them, or conscious of them, to publish them; so striving to decline or to stifle the honour naturally emergent from them.[k] When it was necessary or expedient they should appear, he disclaimed being the principal author of them, referring and ascribing them to God: *I can* (said he) *do nothing of myself:* and, *The word that I spake to you, I spake not of myself; but the Father who abides in me, he doeth the works:* and, *I seek not mine own glory; I receive not glory of men:* thus he professed, and so he practised: consequently the effect was, that (as it is expressed in the Gospels) *fear*, or a pious

* ἀποδεδειγμένος.

[c] Matt. xv. 30, 31.
[d] Matt. ix. 33, 34.
[e] Acts ii. 22.
[f] John xi. 47.
[g] John xii. 42.
[h] John iii. 2.
[i] Mark xvi. 14; Luke ix. 19; John vii. 31; iii 23.
[j] Matt. x. 8.
[k] Matt. viii. 4; xii. 16; ix. 30; Mark v. 43; vii. 36; viii. 26; John v. 41; viii. 49, 50, 54, 24; v. 30; xiv. 10.

reverence, *did seize all men; and they glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people: All the people seeing it gave praise to God: All men were amazed at the mighty power* (or majesty*) *of God: When the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.*[l] And doth not so much glory from his performances resulting to God, so good an influence upon the hearts of men, evidently show whence the power effecting them was derived? would the devil be such an instrument of God's praise?

We may also with St. Irenæus[m] observe, that Jesus, in performing his cures and other miraculous works, did never use any profane, silly, phantastic ceremonies; any muttering of barbarous names or insignificant phrases; any invocation of spirits, or inferior powers; any preparatory purgations, any mysterious circumstances of proceeding, apt to amuse people; any such unaccountable methods or instruments, as magicians, enchanters, diviners, circulatorious jugglers, and such emissaries of the devil, or self-seeking impostors, are wont to use; but did proceed altogether in a most innocent, simple, and grave manner, with a majestic authority and clear sincerity, becoming such an agent of God as he professed himself to be.

That also the whole tenor of his proceedings was directly levelled against the kingdom of darkness; against all the impiety, all the malice, all the filthiness, and all the fallacy thereof; at the casting wicked and impure spirits, not only from the bodies, but out of the souls of men; causing men not only to detest and defy them, but to loathe their qualities, and to eschew their works: this is that binding, disarming, rifling, and dispossessing *the strong one*,[n] which Jesus alleged as an infallible argument, that he was not only no friend, but a mighty enemy to the infernal powers; an enemy, not only in disposition and design quite contrary, but in virtue and force highly superior to them: that we should worship God alone with most hearty reverence and love; that we should bear the same clear good-will to all men as we do to ourselves; that we should be strictly just, veracious, and sincere, in our words and dealings, meek and humble in our spirits, pure and sober in all our enjoyments (things perfectly opposite to the temper and interests of hell), were things, which as our Lord constantly in his doctrine did inculcate, so he countenanced and furthered them by his works;[o] from whence assuredly we may collect, that they came from heaven, and were intended for the promoting God's service: hell would never contribute so much to its own disgrace and disadvantage, would never so industriously concur to defeat and destroy itself: God plainly reaped the benefit by Jesus's works; he therefore certainly did plant them and bless them.

Upon these considerations it appeareth sufficiently, that in correspondence to the reason and exigency of the case, our Lord did perform innumerable works which had impressed on them the truest and highest characters of divinity; the most peculiar grandeur, and perfect goodness; the purest holiness of design, and the beneficial tendency proper to the works issuing from divine power: so that supposing God should send the Messias into the world, or any great ambassador from himself, he could scarce possibly, he should not at least, all things considered, need to furnish him with more convincing attestations than he hath exhibited to our Lord. Whence we may well apprehend the validity of that argument, which our Lord himself suggested for assurance of St. John the Baptist in his opinion concerning him, or rather for the satisfaction of St. John's disciples: when John sent two of his disciples, with this inquiry, *Art thou he, or look we for another?* Jesus thus replied; *Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached; and blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.*[p]

* Ἐπὶ τῇ μεγαλειότητι.

[l] Luke vii. 16; ix. 43; xviii. 43; Matt. ix. 8; xv. 30.

[m] Iren. ii. 58.

[n] Luke xi. 21; Matt. xii. 29.

[o] Tertull. Apol. 23.

[p] Matt. xi. 5; Luke vii. 22.

6. God most signally did attest to our Lord by miraculously raising him from the dead; or in that by a divine power he raised up himself from the grave; which work, for the singular greatness, and high consequence thereof, together with the certain evidence that it was really performed, might alone suffice to confirm the verity of all our Lord's pretences [that he was the true *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world*, the *Lord of all things*, the *Judge of all the world*;] most efficaciously to evince and persuade the most eminent and important facts of his doctrine (the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, the just and wise providence of God over men, the dispensation of rewards and punishments hereafter, answerable to men's conversation and practice in this life.) This indeed is the point, which invincibly guardeth and fortifieth all other testimonies; but it is so pregnant of considerations belonging to it, that it deserveth more time and room than we now can yield it; wherefore we choose rather at present to pass it over, than slightly to touch it, reserving it for a peculiar subject of discourse.

7. A further attestation was given to our Lord by the power of doing miracles in his name imparted to the disciples; who by him were appointed and authorized to prosecute the great design commenced by himself:* not only his person, but even his name did great wonders; it cured diseases, it cast out devils, it surmounted nature, and subdued hell: whereby he indeed appears, for especial favour with God, personal excellency, dignity of office, importance of undertaking, incomparably to have surpassed all former prophets and commissioners of God, by whose ministry any law, covenant, or doctrine, hath been conveyed to men; never by delegation or in dependence upon any other person, never in any other person's name, were such works done. To the twelve apostles at their first mission, he among other instructions enjoined thus; *Cure the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils; ye have freely received, freely give:*[q] to the seventy disciples, sent out by himself to instil the rudiments of his doctrine, and to admonish people of his approach, he gave this commission and charge; *In any city into which you enter, heal those which are sick therein; and say unto them, The kingdom of heaven is come near unto you:*[r] he then adds; *Behold, I give you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy:* the success was, that *they returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.*[s] At his departure he promised and foretold thus; *These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents:** *and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover:*[t] all which things were abundantly fulfilled; for a liberal communication of divine power was granted to them, enabling them to perform the greatest works; so that, as St. Luke telleth us, *by the hands of the apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people;*[u] the performance of which was so notorious, that upon knowledge, and in confidence thereof, *there came* (saith the holy historian) *a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one.*[v] The like power also was by the apostles derived unto others, in such kind and measure as the carrying on Jesus's great design (the propagation of God's truth and the edification of his church) did require;[w] by succession it was transmitted through several ages, and visibly continued so long as such extraordinary means were useful or expedient for the conviction and conversion of the world; most of the first Fathers of the church do expressly testify concerning remainders thereof in their times: *It is not possible* (saith St. Irenæus, for one instance among

* Omnis hæc nostra in illos dominatio et potestas de Christi nominatione valet, &c.—*Tert. Apol.* 23; Acts iii. 16.

* Ἄρουσι.

[q] Matt. x. 8.
[r] Luke x. 8, 9, 19.
[s] Luke x. 17.
[t] Mark xvi. 17.
[u] Acts ii. 4, 43; v. 12.
[v] Luke vi. 17, 18; Acts viii. 17.
[w] Heb. ii. 4; Rom. xv. 18.

others innumerable) *to tell the number of the graces* (or special gifts) *which the church through the whole world, receiving from God, doth, in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate, daily perform for the succour of the nations*,[x] &c. And remarkable is the confidence of Tertullian, reporting the effects of this power in his time: he, in his apologetic speech for the Christians, even dares to provoke the ethnic governors to trial, and to lay the issue concerning not only the truth of Christian doctrine, but the lives and safety of its professors thereon: *Let* (saith he) *any person, manifestly possessed with the Devil, or one who is deemed to be rapt with a divine fury, be set before your tribunals; that spirit, being commanded by a Christian to speak, shall as truly there confess himself to be a devil, as otherwhere a god—If he do not so confess, not daring to lie, even there spill the blood of that procacious Christian: What* (adds he) *is more manifest than that work? what more faithful than that probation? Stand not to these sayings, if your eyes and ears will suffer you.*[y] The like assertions and challenges might be produced out of divers other Fathers.

Neither, perhaps, is the communication of this divine virtue so ceased now, that it would be wanting upon any needful occasion;* the frequent performance of such works among them in whom faith by abundance of other competent means may be produced and confirmed, unto whom also the first miracles are virtually present by the help of history and good reason, is indeed nowise necessary, nor perhaps would be convenient; but did the same pious zeal for God's honour, and the same charitable earnestness for men's good, excite any persons now to attempt the conversion of infidels to the sincere Christian truth, I see no reason to doubt but that such persons would be enabled to perform whatever miraculous works should conduce to that purpose; for *the Lord's hand is not shortened*, the grace of Christ is not straitened, the name of Jesus hath not lost its virtue.[z]

8. God did attest to our Lord by accomplishing his prediction and promise, in a plentiful effusion of the divine Spirit upon his church and disciples, for their perfect instruction and guidance, for their support and comfort, for enabling them to convince and convert men to him: *When* (said our Lord to them before his decease, concerning this attestation) *the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from my Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:* and, *Tarry ye* (said he again, after his resurrection) *in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*[a]

Accordingly, soon after our Lord's ascension, as the Holy Spirit was conspicuously dispensed, upon various occasions, in divers proportions, and in different ways, according to the exigencies of things, for the edification and enlargement of the church; so especially at Pentecost it was in a most solemn manner and abundant measure poured forth upon the whole church and each member of it; *For then* (saith St. Luke) *the disciples* (*to the number of one hundred and twenty persons*) *being gathered together—with one accord, in one place;—suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind* (which was a most proper emblem of the Holy Spirit's nature and powerful efficacy), *and it filled all the house where they were sitting* (which then typified the catholic church, through which the Holy Spirit was to be diffused, to animate and actuate it;) *and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire* (denoting the various gifts and graces imparted for expression of God's praise and propagation of his truth, which were to be enlivened by fervent charity, zeal, and devotion,*) *and it sat upon each of them;*[b] implying that every faithful Christian constantly should partake of

* Τῆς δυνάμεως τῶν σημείων οὐδ' ἴχνος ὑπολέλειπται.—Chrys. de Sacerd. 4, in Joh. Or. 24, in Psal. cxlii; Aug. de Bapt. iii. 16; Retract. i. 13.

[x] Iren. ii. 48. [y] Tert. Apol. 23.

* Μεριζόμεναι διὰ τὸ χαρισμάτων διάφορον.—Naz. Or. 44.

[z] Isa. lix. 4; l. 2.

[a] The Spirit of God doth attest to him, John xv. 26; Acts v. 32; 1 John v. 7, 8; 1 Cor. xii; Acts x. 45; John xv. 26; Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 4; ii. 33; iv. 31; viii. 17; x. 44; xi. 15; xiii. 52; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xii.

[b] Acts i. 15; ii. 1.—

this heavenly benefit, according to his need; *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance:* that is, they were perfectly inspired, so that each was endowed with the gift of speaking a language before unknown to him; which was a miracle very great, and most pertinent; to learn a strange tongue requiring much time and great pains; the speaking such tongues being then very serviceable to the promulgation of the gospel: all which event was very public and notorious; for that at that festival time *there were* (saith the divine historian) *dwelling at Jerasalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised about, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language—the wonderful things of God.*

This was, therefore, a general attestation to our Lord, pregnant and clear as could be, both for conviction of unbelievers and confirmation of the faithful: the which effects it had; so that in virtue thereof, St. Peter having explained the design of it, *three thousand souls were added to the church;* and all *did continue stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.*[c]

Besides also it was an illustrious pledge of that inestimable gift, to be perpetually communicated to the church for its edification, and to each Christian for his direction and assistance in religious praccite, according to the evangelical covenant; the which is a standing witness, attesting to our Lord, in the heart and conscience of every good man, according to that of St. Peter; *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him:*[d] he indeed keeping his residence and exerting his power in all pious souls; shining into their minds with *the true heavenly light* (that *pure and perfect wisdom, which is from above;*[e]) kindling charity, devotion, comfort, joy, in their hearts; supporting them in trials and temptations; raising their affections and desires above this present transitory world; diposing them to relish spiritual things, and to entertain themselves with the hopes of future blessedness; doth assure them, that *Jesus is the Lord;* doth *seal* to them the truth of his doctrine, the reality of his promises, the efficacy of his grace, the wonderful greatness of his love and goodness toward them; so that hence that is abundantly verified which St. John telleth us, *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*[f]

There are divers other considerable attestations to our Lord; such as the divine sublimity of his doctrine, discovering itself to enlightened minds to shine from heaven; the testimony of God's Spirit to the hearts and consciences of good and faithful people, assuring them that *Jesus is the Lord*, and sealing to them the truth of his doctrine; the operation of God's grace in production of moral virtues, or the purgation of heart and amendment of life flowing from faith in him, the efficacy of prayers in his name offered to God; all the joys, and comforts, and happy fruits springing from Christian devotion; the good effects the gospel hath had in reformation of the world, inducing many great benefits, and preventing mischiefs therein: but these and the like, being not so public, so distinctly observable, so easily drawn into argument, apt to convince the incredulous, I shall pass over; adding but one more of a more general and conspicuous nature.[g]

9. Lastly, God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his gospel in its conveyance and propagation: its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest oppositions, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of itself, accomplished by means to appearance so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of Providence against the course of human affairs, than the rest performed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power

[c] Acts ii. 41, 42.
[d] Acts v. 32.
[e] Eph. i. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 6.
[f] 1 Cor. xii. 3; Rom. viii. 16; Gal. iv. 6; 2 Cor. i. 22; iv. 2; v. 5; Eph. i. 13; iv. 30; 1 John v. 10.
[g] Rom. viii. 16; Gal. iv. 6; 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; iv. 2; Eph. i. 13; iv. 30; 1 Cor. xii. 3; 1 John v. 10,—Ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔχει τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

of natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency: the work was *a victory over the world* and over hell, achieved *by the faith of Jesus;* and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause itself, which they maintained for him.

They were *not many wise*, *not many mighty*, *not many noble*, *but* a very few, mean and poor, unlearned and simple men, whom no outward circumstances commended to human regard, no worldly advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to support them in their endeavours;[h] a few fishermen, publicans, tent-makers, and other persons of like quality, education, improvement, and capacity, were the instruments of this great work; those brave soldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array against all his adversaries: and what adversaries were they? who, but all the majesty and authority, all the force and violence, all the policy and craft, all the wit, learning, wisdom, and eloquence, all the passion and rage of men, all the power, cunning, and malice of the cursed spirits; in short, all the forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined against them.* They were to check and control the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty emperors and potentates; whose assumed divine honours they decried as vain and wicked; whose commands they reprehended as unjust and impious; to whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints, declaring them obliged to contain their practice within bounds of piety, equity, and temperance: they were to suppress the credit and the gain of all priests or ministers of religion in the world, whose doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose practices they reproved as vile and damnable: they were to confute all the subtilty of philosophers, all the eloquence of orators, all depths of learning, and improvements of reason or wit; impugning the opinions famous and current among men as false, or slighting them as frivolous: they were to overbear and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by natural inclination and temper, by countenance of long tradition and custom; by education, by public laws, and all so mighty enforcements: they were to charge with reproach all ages past, and the ancestors of all people in the world (those of one small people only in part excepted), of very gross ignorance and error, of sottish folly, of heinous wickedness and impiety: they were to sustain all the slanders, reproaches, and persecutions, which the resolute opposing so many interests, humours, and opinions inevitably would produce: they were besides vigorously to assault Satan and all his complices; to beat down his worship, and overturn his domination; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

All these great exploits they were to achieve in a most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most plain and simple without any terror or tumult, any sleight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or subtilty of reasoning; without applying either any rude violence or sly allurement: they were indeed little more than barely to report a story, and to affirm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in connection with that story some plain honest rules of life here in this world, and denouncing some consequences on the belief of their story and the practice of their rules in another world hereafter. These things it was their business to tell simply, and to aver confidently, charging men at their utmost peril to believe them;[i] boldly condemning whatever thing and what person soever should oppose their report or doctrine: they were not to assay the persuading this, or dissuading from the contrary, by fine strains of speech, or with acute *enthymemes;*[j] but to propose it without care or circumstance, in such a homely dress and naked plainness of speech, that even

* Clemens Alexandrinus well says, that no philosophy would have endured such a test, or endured such a shock of persecution.

Καὶ τὴν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν ἑλληνικὴν εἶν ὁ τυχὼν ἄρχων κωλύσῃ, οἴκεται παραχρῆμα, τὴν δὲ ἡμετέραν, &c.—Strom. vi. (p. 502.)——Καίτοι γε μυρίων ὅσων κωλυμάτων γενομένων πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπισπαρῆναι τὴν Ἰησοῦ διδασκαλίαν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ.—Orig. cont. Cels. vii. (p. 349.)

[h] 2 Cor. i. 26; Ἀγράμματοι, καὶ ἰδιῶται, Acts iv. 13.

[i] 1 Cor. iv. 5; 2 Cor. iv. 7; xii. 9.

[j] 1 Cor. ii. 4.

children and idiots might easily comprehend the main of their sense and drift: all the strength, the ornament, the charm of their discourse, consisted in the clear sincerity shining through it; joined with a constant adherence to their doctrine, an earnest diligence in promoting it, an admirable patience in joyfully suffering all contumelies and adversities incident to them for its sake; accompanied also with a blameless innocence and integrity of life, a sweet calmness of mind and meekness of behaviour, together with a kind and charitable disposition toward all men: these were all the human or natural *weapons of their warfare;* with which alone, God's help concurring, they did (to use St. Paul's words) *pull down strong holds, and cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God: bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:*[k] in this strange manner did they maintain their cause:

A cause, indeed, which of itself did not seem likely to prosper in the world, having in itself so little of plausibility, and affording to the embracers thereof so very small encouragement:[l] which enjoined to its followers the worship and imitation of a Person lying under extreme disadvantages in the eye of man; who had lived in a very mean condition, and had suffered a most ignominious death; whom, therefore, to be obliged to adore, and obey, could not but to the ordinary sense of men appear very offensive: which again recommended a doctrine little grateful, or rather very cross, to the natural propensions, to the current principles, to the secular advantages of men; which indulged men in nothing that they were apt to like, but greatly curbed and checked them in the use of their liberties, gratification of their fancies, and enjoyment of their pleasures; which much disparaged all the pleasing goods, and all the flattering glories of the world; charging men never much to affect or seek them, sometimes utterly to quit and renounce them; freely choosing in their stead to undertake a cross with all its pains and disgraces, which propounded it as an essential ingredient of itself, or a condition necessary for all that should avow it, to *circumcise the heart*, to *mortify the deeds of the body, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; to cut off right hands*, and *pull out right eyes;*[m] to part with all their fortunes, to hate their relations, to sacrifice their lives, if they were thereto called, for its sake; which rendered men, as it were, dead to all present fruitions, and unconcerned in all hopes here; engaging them entirely to place their contents and happiness in a reversion of things invisible and future: they, in fine, did hold forth a doctrine to the sense of flesh and blood full of most rigid laws, severe rules, harsh conditions, and *hard sayings;* apt to choke the faith of men, and to obstruct its entertainment with them.

Now, that a handful of such persons, against such obstacles, in ways so preposterous, and different from the course of human proceedings, were able to render so unlikely a cause so absolutely victorious;* so that suddenly all the might, wit, and eloquence of men, did stoop unto it, and serve under it; that the majesty of the greatest princes gladly veiled thereto, that the prudence of statesmen cordially did approve it, that all the learning of the world yielded itself up captive and tributary thereto, that all superstition vanished before it, and all the force of hell sunk under it; is it not a huge argument, that God himself did in favour thereof interpose his omnipotent arm; that to the Lord of hosts (*unto whom*, as king Asa said, *it is nothing to help whether with many, or with them that have no power:* to whom it is indifferent *to save by many or by few*[n]) this glorious victory is to be ascribed, who thereby was pleased to accomplish his ancient promises, to maintain his holy truth, to further the salvation of his creatures, to promote his own

[k] 2 Cor. x. 4.

[l] *Vide* Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61, p. 635.

* Τὸ ῥῆμα ἐκεῖνο, τὸ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τοῦτο πάντα εἰργάσατο, τοιοῦτοι γὰρ οἱ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγοι, ἔργων δημιουργοὶ, ἔργων θαυμαστῶν καὶ παραδόξων, &c.—Chrys. tom. vi. Orat. 61, p. 636.

Πῶς οὖν τοσούτων πρᾶγμα μετὰ τοσούτων κωλυμάτων καὶ πέρας ἔσχεν οὕτω λαμπρὸν καὶ ἔκβασιν μαρτυροῦσαν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, εἰ μὴ θεία τις καὶ ἄμαχος δυνάμις ἦν τοῦ ταῦτα εἰπόντος, καὶ τελέσαντος, &c.—Ibid. p. 637.

[m] Rom. viii. 13; Gal. v. 24.

[n] 2 Chron. xiv. 11; 1 Sam. xiv. 6; Rom. xv. 8.

glory, and especially to magnify the name of his only beloved Son Jesus, our ever blessed Lord? to whom *for ever and ever be all praise.* Amen.

Having thus largely endeavoured to show that Jesus our Lord is the Messias, and consequently supposed the truth of the Christian doctrine; let us now briefly recapitulate and explain in what manner and in what respects the New Testament represents him as *Christ;* how, according to that, Jesus was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all the offices denoted by the title Christ (the office *prophetical*, *regal*, and *sacerdotal*), and how he effectually doth execute them.

Him, saith St. Peter in general, God anointed with the Holy Spirit and power:[o] God anointed him, not with an external effusion of material oil (as neither were the patriarchs, nor King Cyrus, who are yet called *the Christs of God;*) that was only a ritual and symbolical business; but with a real infusion of divine grace and power, qualifying and enabling him perfectly to execute all those great and extraordinary functions. With this gladsome oil he was thoroughly anointed and replenished above measure: with this he was *sanctified from the womb;* when the *power of the Highest did overshadow him* at his conception:[p] with this at his baptism he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when *the heavens were opened* unto him, and *the Spirit of God descended upon him as a dove, and came upon him:*[q] with this in all the course of his life and ministry he was continually accompanied; the virtue of it being discovered and diffused in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, wonderful and glorious performances, for the honour of God and the benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed minds: *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth* (saith St. Peter in the Acts) *with the Holy Ghost; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him.*[r] He was by this spiritual unction constituted in right and in effect a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest.*

1. First, a *Prophet:* for they were not mistaken, who, upon his raising the widow's child, were *amazed, and glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet was raised up among them*, and that *God had visited his people.*[s] Nor they, (in St. John's Gospel) who, reflecting upon another great miracle (feeding multitudes with five loaves and two little pickled fishes), break out into this confession, *This is in truth that Prophet who was to come into the world.*[t]

And the disciples well described him, who styled him, *a Prophet mighty in word and deed, before God and all the people.*[u] He was so, as having an extraordinary commission from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by express testimony of St. John the Baptist (*the person of most remarkable sanctity and greatest authority in his time*), by the performance of innumerable and incomparable signs and works miraculous (*arguments in the highest degree and to the utmost possibility sufficient to assert and confirm it.*) He was also in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function, by inspiration complete and unlimited; by disposition of mind altogether pure and holy;[v] (expressed in a continual practice of life void of all sin and guile; by an insuperable courage and constancy, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning sweetness and goodness, a most powerful awfulness and majesty, shining in all his discourse and demeanour.)

Suitable also to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person were the weight and the extent of the doctrine he in God's name revealed; it concerning no less than the salvation of mankind and reconciliation of the world to God; the entire will of God, and whole duty of man; with all the laws and precepts, the covenants and conditions, the promisings and threatenings, relating to our future state. He did not (as other prophets have done) prophesy

[o] Acts x. 38.
[p] Psal. xlv. 7; Luke iv. 1; John iii. 34; Luke ii. 35.
[q] Matt. iii. 16.
[r] Acts x. 38.
[s] John vi.; Luke vii. 16.
[t] John vi. 14.
[u] Luke xxiv. 19; Εἷς ὑμῶν καθηγητής, ὁ Χριστός, Matt. xxiii 8.
[v] 1 Pet ii. 22; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 John iii. 5.

about the constitution of one particular law, religion, or covenant; about the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment or fate determined to one nation; but his design reached to the instruction and conversion of all people, in all places, through all times, to the settling of a law and covenant obsolutely universal and perpetual: mysteries he brought forth never before revealed, and decrees never to be reversed; to the final doom of all the world did his prophetical denunciations extend. So is he a *Prophet*. Such he was in his temporal appearance and administrations upon earth; and such he continues for ever in heaven; from thence upon all occasions by his holy Spirit imparting to his faithful people all needful instruction in truth, direction in practice, admonition to duty, and comfort in trouble. He is also such by the ministry of his servants, whom he hath appointed, and whom he assists, to instruct and guide us.

2. He is also a *King*, by many unquestionable titles, of a great and extensive authority, exercising it to the best effects and purposes. He is a king by *nature* and *birth*; as *the only Son of God*, partaker of his eternal power and majesty; for therefore to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre:*[w] and as *the Son of David;* for of him the angel said, *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign over the house of David for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*[x] He is also a King by *divine designation* and appointment. For, *Let all the house of Israel* (saith St. Peter) *know assuredly that God hath made him Lord and Christ;*[y] and, *The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man* (or as such.) He is also King by *merit* and *purchase;* for, *he for the suffering of death was crowned with glory and honour; he was obedient to death, even the death of the cross; therefore God super-exalted him, and bestowed on him a name above every name.*[z] *To this end he both died and rose again, that he might lord it over both the dead and living.*[a] He is King also by *conquest:* having delivered us out of *the power of darkness*, and freed us from the vassalage of sin; *having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly*, and triumphed over them;[b] having *delivered us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; that we being delivered from our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*[c] He is also a King by our *election* and free choice, we having voluntarily put ourselves under his protection, and submitted to his command, and taken upon ourselves his yoke, and vowed everlasting fealty to him in our baptism.[d] Such a right he hath of governing.

As for the *extent* of his *kingdom*, it is in all respects boundless, both for place and time; it is universal and perpetual. He is the eternal King of all the world: God hath *so exalted him and given him a name above all names, that to the name of Jesus every knee should bend, whether of things in heaven or things upon earth, or things under the earth.*[e] *To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb*, by every creature *in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth*, are jointly to be ascribed *the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the power, for ever and for ever.*[f] He is constituted ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, *above all rule, and authority, and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come:* it is his just title and proper badge, *The King of kings, and Lord of lords;*[g] to whom all nations are vassals, yea all creatures are subject and tributary. But he in especial manner is King over his church; that *peculiar people*, whom he hath especially purchased to himself by his merits and blood; whom he hath subdued to his obedience by the sword of his word, and by the prevailing virtue of his Spirit; that mystical Zion, in which it is said that

[w] Heb. i. 8; Isa. ix. 6.
[x] Luke i. 32.
[y] Acts ii. 36.
[z] John v. 22, 27; Heb. i. 2; ii. 9; Phil. ii. 8, ὑπέρυψωσε ἐχαρίσατο.
[a] Rom. xiv. 9, ἵνα κυριεύσῃ.
[b] Col. i. 13; ii. 15.
[c] Luke i. 71, 74; Tit. ii. 14; Rom. vi. 22; John viii. 36.
[d] Matt. xi. 29.
[e] Phil. ii. 8.
[f] Rev. v. 13; xix. 16; i. 5; xvii. 12.
[g] Eph. i. 21; Col. ii. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Matt. xxviii. 18; xi. 27; John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2; Eph. i. 22; Acts xx. 28.

God *will place his reign and residence for ever;* that *heavenly city*, whereof all the saints are *fellow-citizens*, and he the sovereign Head and Governor: *God hath* (saith St. Paul) *put all things under his feet, and hath given him head above all things to the church.*[h] In respect to which, both the evangelical dispensation here, and the future state of bliss hereafter, are called *the kingdom of heaven.* Over this he reigns, enjoying all royal prerogatives, exercising all royal administrations, and dispensing most royal munificences. He hath in this his kingdom established most righteous and wholesome laws; the which his subjects are by him obliged and enabled to obey. He constantly defendeth and protecteth his subjects from all invasions and assaults of their enemies (intestine enemies, their own lusts; external enemies, the devil and the world.) He provides for all their needs and wants; he supports them in all their distresses and troubles. He exercises judgment over them; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity (most liberal rewards to the loyal and obedient; most severe punishments upon obstinate offenders and rebels.) He, lastly, restrains and suppresses, defeats and destroys, all the adversaries to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual.[i] *Out of his mouth* (as it is in the Apocalypse) *there goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. These mine enemies* (he shall one day say) *which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me. He must reign* (saith St. Paul) *till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*[j] Thus is he a King, endued with sovereign right and power, crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all preeminences, and exercising all acts suitable to regal dignity.

3. He is likewise a *Priest*, and that much above an ordinary one;* διαφορωτέρας τέτευχε λειτουργίας. *He hath obtained a more excellent function* (as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) than ever any other priest had. *Every high-priest* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices.*[k] He did, as such, once offer up an oblation, in worth and excellency far surpassing all the sacrifices and oblations that ever were made;[l] (all the fattest hecatombs that ever were sacrificed, all the gold and precious stones that ever were dedicated, all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled into incense upon altars, were but vile and sordid, were ineffectual and unacceptable, in comparison thereto:) a willing oblation he made upon the altar of his cross, of himself (his most innocent, most pure, most spotless and unblemished self), of his most glorious body (the temple of the Divinity), of his most precious blood, of his dear life, *for the life of the world* and redemption of mankind; for the *propitiation of our sins and the sins of the whole world;*[m] an oblation which alone could appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, and merit his favour toward us.

He doth also (which is another sacerdotal performance) *intercede for us;* he intercedes as an advocate for the pardon of our sins (*If any man sin, we have an advocate with* (or to) *the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*[n]) He intercedes for the acceptance of our services (whence we are enjoined to *do all things, to pray, to give thanks in his name;*) for the *granting our requests; for grace and assistance;* for *comfort* and *reward;* for all *spiritual blessings* and advantages to be conferred upon us;[o] he thus pursuing the work of salvation by his propitiatory sacrifice begun for us; whence, as the apostle to the Hebrews saith, *he is able to save to the uttermost those that by him come to God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*[p]

He doth also perform the priestly function of *blessing.* Blessing the people in God's name, and blessing God in the people's behalf; as did that illustrious

* Heb. viii. 6,—Ἀρχιερεὺς τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν.

[h] Psal. cxxxii. 13; Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2; Heb. xii. 22; Gal. iv. 26; Eph. ii. 19; i. 22.

[i] Col. ii. 15.

[j] Rev. xix. 15; Psal. ii. 9; Matt. xxv. 31; Luke xix. 27; 1 Cor. xv. 25.

[k] Heb. iii. 1; viii. 3.

[l] 1 Pet. i. 18; Heb. ix. 9.

[m] Heb. vii. 26, 27; x. 10, 5; ix. 12; Eph. v. 2; John x. 16; vi. 51; 1 John ii. 2.

[n] 1 John ii. 1; 1 Tim. ii. 5; John xiv. 13; xv. 16; xvi. 23, 24; Eph. v. 20; Heb. v. 7.

[o] Eph. i. 3, 6.

[p] Heb. vii. 25.

type of him, Melchizedek: (*Blessed*, said he, *be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.*[l]) So hath Jesus effectually pronounced all joy and happiness to his faithful people: he pronounced blessedness to them in his sermons; he blessed his disciples at his parting: *Lifting up his hands, he blessed them*, saith St. Luke; *God in him* (saith St. Paul) *hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places* (or *in heavenly things;*) and, *God* (saith St. Peter) *having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless us in turning every one of us from his iniquity:*[r] and at the last day he will utter that comfortable benediction, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*[s] So is Jesus a true and perfect *Priest*. And,

So, finally, in all respects, is *Jesus God's anointed*, and *the Christ of God;* as the great *Prophet* and Doctor; as the *Sovereign King* and *Prince;* as the *High Priest* and *Advocate* of his church. And indeed that he is so is the fundamental point of our religion; which the apostles did peculiarly testify, preach, and persuade; the sincere belief of which doth constitute and denominate us *Christians*.

IV. The consideration whereof ought to beget in us a practice answerable to the relations between him and us; grounded thereupon.

If Jesus be such a *Prophet*, we must, with careful attention, and a docile mind, hearken to his admonitions and instructions; we must yield a steady belief to all his doctrine, and we must adhere constantly thereto, and we must readily obey and practise what he teaches.*

If he be a *King*, we must maintain our due allegiance to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs.

If he be a *Priest*, we must with sincere faith and hope apply ourselves unto him for, and rely upon, his spiritual ministries in our behalf; sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by virtue of his sacrifice; the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession; all comfort, joy, and felicity, in consequence of his effectual benediction. *Having* (so the apostle to the Hebrews admonisheth us) *a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.*[t]

In short, if *Jesus* be *Christ*, let us be *Christians:* Christians, not only in name, in outward profession, in speculation and opinion, but in very deed and reality, in our heart and affection, in all our conversation and practice. *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (that is, who confesseth Jesus to be Christ, and himself to be his follower) *depart from iniquity.*[u]

Now the God of peace, that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

His Only Son, &c.

SERMON XXI.

JOHN i. 14.—*And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.*

THAT *Jesus Christ our Lord* is the μονογενής, *the only Son of God*, that is, the Son of God in a peculiar and high manner, otherwise far than any creature can be so termed, St. John doth here (and in several other places[a]) suppose, or assert plainly; and it is a great point of the Christian doctrine, a special object of our faith. To show the truth of which, to explain how it is to be understood, and to apply the consideration thereof to our

* Heb. ii. 1, &c.—Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ ἡμᾶς προσέχειν τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσι, μήποτε παραῤῥυῶμεν, &c.

[l] 1 Chron. xxiii. 13; Lev. ix. 22, 23; Numb. vi. 23; Gen. xiv. 19, 20.

[r] Matt. v. 1, &c.; Luke xxiv. 50; Eph. i. 3; Acts iii. 26.

[s] Matt. xxv. 34.

[t] Heb. x. 21, 22.

[u] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[a] John i. 18; iii. 16, 18; 1 John iv. 9.

practice, shall be the subject and scope of our present dicourse.

I. That the Messias, designed by God to come into the world for the restoring and reconciling mankind unto God, was in an especial manner to be the Son of God, even the ancient prophets did foretel and presignify: *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, saith God of him in the second Psalm.[b] And of him, that which in the first less perfect sense was spoken to king Solomon (who as the son and heir of David, as the builder of God's house, as a prince of peace, reigning in great glory, wealth, and prosperity; as endued with incomparable wisdom, did most signally represent and prefigure him), was chiefly intended for him, and did more exactly agree to him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever:* and again; *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation: Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.*[c] And accordingly it was, even before our Saviour's appearance, a persuasion commonly passing among the Jews (both learned and unlearned), that the Messias should be the Son of God; as may be collected from several passages in the New Testament; in which, being *the Christ* and being *the Son of God* are conjoined as inseparable adjuncts, whereof one did imply the other, according to the sense then current, and previous to the embracing our Lord's doctrine. For Nathaniel, we see, was no sooner persuaded that Jesus was the Christ, but he (according to his anticipation, common to the people) confessed thus: *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; Rabbi, thou art the King of Israel.*[d] Martha in like manner being moved to declare her faith concerning Jesus, expresseth it thus: *Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world:*[e] and likewise doth St. Peter, in the name of all his brethren the apostles: *We have believed, and have known, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*[f] St. John the Baptist also doth thus express his belief and yield his testimony concerning Jesus: *And I said, and bare record, that this is the Son of God.*[g] Yea, even the high priest himself implied the same, when examining our Lord he said, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? I adjure thee by the living God, tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God:* supposing that to be *the Christ* and to be *the Son of God* would concur in the same person.[h] Yea, the devils themselves had learned this, who cried out, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?*[i]

Thus did the ancient scriptures intimate, and thus were God's people generally persuaded, about the Messias; and that he is indeed the Son of God, the evangelical scripture doth every where teach us, calling him not only at large *the son of God*, but more emphatically the ἀγαπητὸς *the darling Son of God;* the υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης, *Son of God's love;*[j] the υἱὸς ἀληθινὸς, *God's true Son* (that is, such most properly, in a most excellent manner incomparably representing and resembling God;) the ἴδιος υἱὸς, *God's proper*, or peculiar *Son;* the πρωτοτόκος, *God's firstborn;* God's υἱὸς μονογενὴς, *his only begotten Son:*[k] all which epithets import somewhat of peculiar eminency in the kind and ground of this his relation unto God. The relation itself in a large sense, and equivocally, is attributed to several: Adam is called *the Son of God;* and the angels are usually entitled such; and princes are styled *the children of the Most High;* and *all men* are said to be *God's offspring*, and *good men* are especially dignified with that appellation; *God's people*, as such (the Israelites of old, and Christians now) are *the children of God;* yea, God is the *Father of all things*, as the maker and preserver of them:[l] but all these, in comparison to Christ, are such in a manner very inferior, and in a very improper sense;* for he

[b] Psal. ii. 7; Heb. i. 5; Acts xiii. 33.
[c] 1 Chron. xxii. 10; xxviii. 6; 2 Sam. vii. 13; Psal. lxxxix. 26, 7; Heb. i. 25.
[d] John i. 49. [e] John xi. 27.

* κατὰ τινα σχέσιν ὑψηλοτέραν.—Naz. Orat. 37.
[f] John vi. 69; Matt. xvi. 16. [g] John i. 34.
[h] Mark xvi. 16; Matt. xxvi. 63.
[i] Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 41, 34.
[j] Matt. iii. 17; xii. 18; xvii. 5.
[k] Eph. i. 6; Col. i. 13; Rom. viii. 32; John v. 18; 1 John v. 20; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 6.
[l] Luke iii. ult.; Psal. lxxxii. 6; Acts xvii. 29; Matt. v. 45.

is the *only Son of God:* which denotes a relation in its kind singular and incomparable; from which all other things are excluded.

Now that we may discern the difference, let us consider the grounds and respects upon which this relation of our Saviour to God is built, or the reasons why he is called the Son of God: there are several expressed or implied in scripture.

1. Christ is called *the Son of God* in regard to his *temporal generation*, as being in a manner extraordinarily conceived in the *Blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost;* so the angel expressly telleth us: *The Holy Ghost* shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God:* so the apostle also; *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman*[m] (or born of a woman, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός—γεννώμενον in some copies:) a generation so peculiar and wonderful, without intervention of any father but God himself, is one ground of this relation and title; he therein excelling the common sort of men.†

2. Christ also may be termed *the Son of God* in regard to his *resurrection* by divine efficacy; that being a kind of *generation*, or introduction into another state of life immortal.‡ Others are upon this ground called the sons of God: *They*, (saith our Saviour) *who shall be accounted worthy to attain that world, and the resurrection from the dead—can die no more; for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God* (υἱοί εἰσι τοῦ Θεοῦ) *being sons of the resurrection.*[n] How much more then may he be thence so named, who is *the first fruits of them that sleep*, and *the firstborn from the dead?* especially since that of the Psalmist, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*, was (according to St. Paul's exposition) verified in the raising him. In this respect Christ also did much excel all others, who upon the same ground are called the sons of God.[o]

3. Christ is capable of this title by reason of that *high office*, in which by God's especial designation he was instated. If ordinary princes and judges (as being deputed by God to represent himself in the dispensation of justice, or as resembling God in the exercise of their power and authority) have been called *the children of the Most High*, in the language of holy scripture;[p] with how much greater truth and reason may he be called so, who was most signally consecrated and commissionated to the most eminent function that ever was or could be; who did whatever he did in God's name, who represented and resembled God so exactly? It is his own argumentation and inference: *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?*[q] That extraordinary *sanctification* and *mission* did render him worthy and capable of that appellation, far beyond all others who have for the like reason obtained it.

4. Whereas also it is said, that God did appoint or *constitute our Saviour heir of all things;* did *give him head above all things to the church*, and did *put all things under his feet; did give him power over all flesh; did commit unto him all authority in heaven and earth;* did *exalt him to the* highest place of dignity and authority next to himself, *at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest;* yea, did place him upon his own throne and *tribunal* in his room, so that *the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;* well may he in that respect be entitled the *Son of God;*[r] as thereby holding the rank and privilege suitable to such a relation; he being the *Chief* of the family, and next in order to the great *Paterfamilias of heaven and earth. Of him* (saith St. Paul) *all the family in heaven and earth is named: Moses verily* (saith the apostle to the He-

* Luke i. 35,—Τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον.

† Luke i. 32,—He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and God shall give him the throne of his father David.

‡ Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, æterni natalis est.—*Sen. Epist.* 102.

[m] Gal. iv. 4. [n] Luke xx. 35, 36.

[o] 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5; Acts xxvi. 23; iii. 15; xiii. 32, 33.

[p] Psal. lxxxii. 6; xxix. 1.

[q] John. v. 35, 36.

[r] Heb. i. 2; Eph. i. 22; John xvii. 2; Matt. xxviii. 18; xi. 27; Phil. ii. 9; Heb. i. 3, &c.; Acts ii. 33, 36; John v. 22.

brews), *was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house:*[s] and, *Being made so much better than the angels* (saith the same apostle), *as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they* (they being only called *servants*, or *ministers;*[t] he being entitled a *Son* and *heir*.)

In these respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly denominated *the Son of God*, with some peculiarity and excellency beyond others: but his being with such emphasis called *God's only begotten Son* (denoting an exclusion of all others from this relation upon the same kind of ground), doth surely import a more excellent ground thereof, than any of these mentioned. For the *first Adam* did also immediately receive his being from the power and inspiration of God (God formed his body and breathed a soul into it.) And Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist, had also a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being born of parents mortified by age and unapt for generation,‡ by interposition of the divine power (so it is expressly said of Sarah, δύναμιν ἔλαβεν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος, *she received power from God for conception of seed;*[u] which productions do not so greatly differ from the production of Christ as man.

And how can we conceive that the production of angels should be so much inferior to our Saviour's temporal generation, if there were no other but that?

And although our Saviour was the first and chief, yet was he not the only Son of the resurrection: *There were* (as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith) *many sons* of this kind *brought to glory;* and Christ was *firstborn among many brethren;*[v] this is also a ground not proper or perspicuous enough for such a denomination; and indeed before it came to pass, he was called God's Son; he was so when he lived, he was so when *God so loved the world, that he gave him for its salvation.*

Neither doth the free collation of power and dignity, how eminent soever, well suffice to ground this singularity of relation;[w] for we see others also, in regard to their designment and deputation to offices of power and dignity, although indeed subordinate and inferior to those he received, to be entitled *the sons of God;* and however this is rather the foundation of a metaphorical, than of a natural and proper *sonship*, which is too slender and insufficient for him who in the most solemn and august strain is denominated such.

Likewise although our Saviour be the heir of all things, yet hath he co-heirs, whom *God hath* (as St. Paul speaketh) *together enlivened, and together raised, and together seated with him in thrones of* glory and bliss;[x] beside, that privileges of this kind are rather *consecutive* and *declarative* of this his relation to God, than formally *constitutive* thereof: *If a son, then an heir*, saith St. Paul;[y] inheritance follows *sonship*, and declareth it, rather than properly makes it.

Moreover those prerogatives of singular affection and favour appropriated to Christ, together with all those glorious preferments consequent on them, do also argue some higher ground of this relation: for how could it be, that merely upon account of that temporal generation (which did only make him a man, *of like passions and infirmities to us, sin only excepted*,[z]) or in respect to any thing consequent thereupon, God should affect him with so special a dearness, and advance him to dignities so superlative, ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, καὶ ἐξουσίας, καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ κυριότητος, *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named; angels and authorities and powers being* (as St. Peter says) *made subject unto him?*[a] Such proceedings (that generation only, or any thing resulting from it, being supposed) do not seem consistent with that decent congruity and natural equity, which God is ever wont to observe in his regard to persons and in his ordering of things.

We must therefore search for a more excellent and more proper ground of this magnificent relation, or peculiar *sonship;* and such an one we shall find clearly de-

‡ Ἀφ' ἑνὸς καὶ ταῦτα νενεκρωμένου.

[s] Eph. iii. 15; Heb. iii. 5, 6.
[t] Heb. i. 4, 5, 7. [u] Heb. xi. 11, 12.
[v] Heb. ii. 10; Rom. viii. 29.
[w] John iii. 16, 18.
[x] Rom. viii. 17, 29; Eph. ii. 5, 6; Heb ii. 10.
[y] Rom. viii. 17. [z] Heb. iv. 15.
[a] Eph. i. 21; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

ducible from testimonies of holy scripture (and by several steps of discourse we shall deduce it.)

1. It is thence first evident, that our Saviour had in him somewhat more than human, according to which he is said to have existed before his temporal generation here among men; even as men after death are in regard to a superviving part of them, their immortal soul, said to be and live; for, even then, saith our Lord, *all men to live to God.*[b] For, before his birth here, he is said to have been in heaven, and to have descended thence: *No man* (saith he) *hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven:*[c] even when he visibly lived here, he was (as himself affirms) *secundum aliquid sui*, according to somewhat invisible in him, then actually in heaven; and according to that *somewhat*, he was before in heaven; and by union of that invisible being to human visible nature, he is said to have descended from heaven. His ascension into heaven was but a translation of the human nature thither, where according to a more excellent nature he did abide before the incarnation; for, *What* (saith he again) *if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?*[d] From hence he is declared worthy and capable of so transcendent preferments; for, *He that cometh from above, out of heaven, is above all things;* because, *The second man is the Lord from heaven.*[e] He, as to his manifestation in the flesh, was junior to St. John the Baptist, but in truth was of more ancient standing, and thence was to be preferred before him, as St. John himself perceived and professed: *He that* (said St. John) *comes after me, is preferred before me, because he was before me.*[f] He did subsist even before Abraham was born, whence without absurdity he could affirm, that he and Abraham had interviews and intercourse together; so he discoursed with the Jews: *Thou art not* (said they) *yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?*[g] he replied; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.* This saying did seem very absurd to them, and so offended them, that they took up stones to cast at him; not apprehending the mystery couched in his words, and that he had another nature, different from that which appeared to them, according to which that saying of his was verified. Yea, further, he had a subsistence and a glory before the world had a being; for thus he prays: *And now, Father, glorify me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee* before the world was;*[h] glory (that is, a most honourable state of being, and excellent perfection) was not only destinated to him, but he really had it, and enjoyed it with God, before the world was.

2. Necessary indeed it was, that he should exist before the world, for that, secondly, God by him made the world, and for that he made the world himself: *God* (saith St. Paul) *created all things by Jesus Christ;*[i] and, *By him* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *God made the worlds* (or the ages, τοὺς αἰῶνας, that is, all things which ever at any time did subsist; those very ages, which the same apostle saith *we believe to have been formby the word of God.*) *By him* (saith St. John in the beginning of his Gospel) *were all things made, and without him was nothing made that was made;*[j] δὶ αὐτοῦ, that is, *by him*, not δὶ αὐτὸν, *for him* only: to exclude that ungrammatical misinterpretation, St. Paul joineth both those notions together; τὰ πάντα δὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται, *All things* (saith he) *were made by him, and for him;*[k] as also to prevent any restriction or exception of matters created by him, he particularly reckoneth what things were made by him: *By him* (saith St. Paul) *were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and for him:* he was not only (as some heterodox interpreters would expound it) to create a new moral and figurative world; he should not only restore and reform mankind, but he of old did truly and properly give being to all

[b] Luke xx. 38.
[c] John iii. 13.
[d] John vi. 62.
[e] John iii. 31; viii. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 47.
[f] John i. 15.
[g] John viii. 58.

* δόξαν εἶχον παρά σοι.
[h] John xvii. 5.
[i] Eph. iii. 9.
[j] Heb. xi. 2; John i. 3.
[k] Col. i. 16.

things; and among those things, he even created angels, *all things in heaven;* beings unto which that metaphorical creation of men here doth not extend or anywise appertain; he therefore consequently, as St. Paul subjoins, ἐστὶ πρὸ πάντων, *doth exist before all things;* as the cause must necessarily in nature precede the effect.

3. He did indeed (to ascend yet higher, even to the top) exist from all eternity: for he is called absolutely ἀρχή, *the beginning*, which excludes all time previous to his existence; he is styled πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, *the firstborn of every creature*,[l] (or rather born before all the creation, as πρῶτός μου ἦν, signifies, *he was before me*, in St. John.) He is *the Word*, which was *in the beginning;*[m] that is, before any time conceivable, and consequently from eternity. He is called *the eternal life: The life* (saith St. John in his first Epistle; *the life;* that is another name, frequently attributed to Christ, especially by that apostle; *the life) was manifested, and we did see it; and we bear witness, and show that eternal life, which was with the Father* (ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, *the Word was with God;*[n] and ἡ ζωὴ ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, *the life was with the Father*, are, as I conceive, the same thing.) And more explicitly in the same Epistle: *We are* (saith St. John) *in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ; he is the true God, and the eternal life.*[o] Hence is he frequently in the Apocalypse styled *the first and the last, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega; he that was, and is, and is to come;*[p] which phrases do commonly express the eternity and immortality proper to God; as in that of Isaiah: *Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God.*[q] The same is signified by that elogy of the Apostle to the Hebrews: *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and forever;*[r] (that is, who is eternally immutable.) That apostle also implies the same, when he saith, that Melchizedek represented and resembled the Son of God, as having μήτε ἀρχὴν ἡμερῶν μήτε ζωῆς τέλος, *neither beginning of days, nor end of life:*[s] Melchizedek in a typical or mystical way, our Lord in a real and proper sense, was such; beginningless and endless in his existence. And the prophet Micah seems to have taught the same, saying of him (of him that should come out of Bethlehem, to be ruler in Israel), that *his goings forth have been from old, even from everlasting*,[t] (or from the days of eternity.) His eternity is, however, necessarily deducible from that which is by St. John, St. Paul, and the Apostle to the Hebrews, so plainly affirmed of him, that he made the world, that he made the ages, that he made *all things;* for if he made the world, he was before the foundations of the world, which phrase denotes eternity; if he made the ages, he must be before all ages; if all things were made by him, and nothing can make itself, then, necessarily he was unmade; and being unmade, he necessarily must be eternal; for what at any time did not exist, can never, without being made, come to exist. His eternity also may be strongly inferred from his being called the *word*, the *wisdom*, and the *power* of God;[u] for if he were not eternal, ἦν ἄρα καιρὸς ὅτε χωρὶς τούτων ἦν ὁ Θεὸς, *there was a time when God wanted these;*[v] when he was without mental speech, or understanding; when he was not wise, when he was not powerful; as St. Athanasius argues. It therefore doth with sufficient evidence appear from scripture, that our Saviour had a being before his temporal birth, and that before all creatures, yea even from eternity. Furthermore,

4. From what hath been said, it follows, that his being was absolutely divine. If he was no creature, if author of all creatures, if eternally subsistent, then assuredly he is God; that state, that action, that property, are incommunicably peculiar unto God: only God is ὁ ὤν, *being of himself* originally and independently; only God is *the creator of all things* (*He that made all things is God*, saith the Apostle to the

[l] Col. i. 18; Rev. iii. 14; Col. i. 15.
[m] John i. 30, 1.
[n] 1 John i. 2; John i. 4; xi. 25; xiv. 6; 1 John i. 2; v. 11, 12, 20.
[o] 1 John v. 20.
[p] Rev. i. 11, 17; ii. 8, 21; vi. 22, 13.
[q] Isa. xliv. 6; xli. 4; xlviii. 12.
[r] Heb. xiii. 8.
[s] Heb. vii. 3.
[t] Mic. v. 2.
[u] 1 Cor. i. 24.
[v] In decret. Conc. Nic. pag. 276.

Hebrews;) *only God hath immortality* (or eternity), saith St. Paul;[w] no epithet or attribute is more proper to God, than that *αἰώνιος Θεὸς*, *God eternal.*[x] Hence is our Lord said by St. Paul, before he did assume the form of a servant, and became like unto men, to have *subsisted in the form of God, not deeming it robbery to be equal to God,*[y] (or to have a subsistence in duration and perfection equal to God;) so that as he was after his incarnation truly man, partaker of human nature, affections, and properties; so before it he was truly God, partaking the divine essence and attributes. Thence is he often in the scriptures absolutely and directly named God; God in the most proper and most high sense: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,*[z] saith St. John in the beginning of his Gospel (the place where he is most likely to speak with the least ambiguity or darkness;) the same Word, which was in time *made flesh, and dwelt among us*, did before all time exist with God, and was God. *God* (saith St. Paul) *was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed up into glory:*[a] of which propositions it is evident that Christ is the subject, and by consequence he is there named God. God is also by St. Paul said to have *purchased the church with his own blood:* who did that, but he that also was man, even *the man Christ Jesus?*[b] St. Thomas, upon his conviction of our Saviour's resurrection, did express his faith upon him by crying out, *My Lord and my God;*[c] which acknowledgment our Saviour accepted and approved as a proper testimony of that faith. (*He permits him to say it, or rather he accepts it, not hindering him*, saith St. Athanasius.*) St. Paul calls the coming of our Lord at the resurrection, *the appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*[d] To the Son (as the Apostle to the Hebrews interpreteth it) it was said in the Psalm (Psal. xlv. 7), *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. We are* (saith St. John) *in the true one, in his Son Jesus Christ; this he* (οὗτος) *is the true God, and life eternal;* no false, no metaphorical, no temporary God, but the very true God, the supreme eternal God. *Out of whom* (saith St. Paul, recounting the privileges of the Jewish nation), *as concerning the flesh* (or according to his humanity), *Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever;*[e] *ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς, the God over all;* the sovereign God and Lord of all things;* the Most High; *God blessed for ever; the ὁ εὐλογητὸς*, which is a characteristical title or special attribute of God in the style of the scriptures, and according to the common use of the Jews.[f] Yea, even of old, Isaiah foretold *of the child which should be born, of the son which should be given to us*, that *his name should be called* (that is, according to the Hebrew manner of speaking, that he should really be, or however that he truly should be called) *the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

In these places more clearly and immediately, in many other places obliquely and according to fair consequence, in many more probably, our Saviour is called God, God absolutely without any interpretative restriction or diminution.[g] And seeing the holy scripture is so careful of yielding occasion to conceive more Gods than one; seeing it is so strict in exacting the belief, worship, and obedience of one only God, absolutely such; may we not well infer with St. Irenæus, *Now* (saith he) speaking indeed concerning the God of the Old Testament, whom the Gnostics did not acknowledge to be the highest and best God, but in words applicable to the God of the New Testament, whom we adore; *Now*, saith he,

* Συγχωρεῖ λέγειν, καὶ μᾶλλον ἀποδέχεται, μὴ κωλύων αὐτόν.—Athan. Orat. 3, contra Ar. p. 394.

[w] Heb. iii. 4; 1 Tim. vi. 16.

[x] Rom. xvi. 26.

[y] Phil. ii. 6, 7,—Τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ.

[z] John i. 1.

[a] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

[b] Acts 20. 28.

[c] John xx. 28.

[d] Tit. ii. 13; Heb. ii. 8; 1 John v. 20.

* Utrosque Dei appellatione significavit Spiritus et eum qui ungitur Filium, et eum qui ungit, id est Patrem.—*Iren.* iii. 6.——Rev. v. 13, πᾶν κτίσμα, (where by the way seeing all creatures worship him, he is excluded from being a creature.)

[e] Rom. xi. 5.

[f] Mark xiv. 61; Rom. i. 25; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Isa. ix. 6.

[g] *Vide* 1 John iii. 16; Gal. i. 1, 12; Jude 4; Isa. xxxv. 4.

neither the Lord, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the apostles would ever have called any one definitively, nor absolutely God, unless he were truly God: and, *Never* (saith he again) *did the prophets or the apostles name any other God, or call Lord, beside the true and only God.**

That he is truly God, we might also from other appellations peculiar to God; from divinest attributes and divinest operations ascribed to him; from the worship and honour we are allowed and enjoined to yield him, further show; but these things (in compliance with the time and your patience) I shall omit.

Other appellations, also, peculiar unto the supreme God, are assigned to him, as that most appropriate and incommunicable name *Jehovah* (of which, in the prophet Isaiah, God himself says thus; *I am the Lord, and there is none else:* and Moses; *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah;*[h] even this is attributed to him; for, *This* (saith Jeremiah) *is his name, whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness:*[i] and of St. John the Baptist it was by Malachi foretold, that he should *prepare the way of Jehovah.* The name *Lord* (answering to Jehovah) is both absolutely and with most excellent adjuncts commonly given him;[j] *The second man* (saith St. Paul), *is the Lord from heaven;* the *Lord of all things* he is called by the same apostle; and *the one,* or *only Lord: To us* (saith he) *there is one Lord, by whom are all things:*[k] and, *the Lord of glory,* or most glorious Lord; (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory:*) and, *The Lord of lords, and King of kings,* he is called in St. John's Revelation (*They shall* (saith he) *war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings:*[l]) we are also by precept enjoined, and by exemplary practice authorised, to render unto our Saviour that honour and worship, which are proper and due the only supreme God; for, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,* is the great law of true religion:[m] *It is only belonging to God* (as St. Athanasius speaks) *to be worshipped; a creature must not worship a creature, but a servant his Lord, and a creature its God.** And, *They who call a creature Lord, and worship him as a creature how* (saith he) *do they differ from the heathen?*† But of him it is said, *Let all the angels of God worship him;* of him myriads of angels say, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and blessing: yea, all creatures in heaven and earth, and under the earth,* resound the same acclamation saying, *To him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the worship, and the praise for ever. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood—to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*[n] Hence the throne of God the Father and of his Son are one and the same: *The throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it,* saith St. John, speaking of the heavenly city; *For the Son* (saith that great father) *reigning with the same royalty of his Father, is seated upon the same throne with his Father.*‡ To invocate the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is a practice characterizing and distinguishing Christians from infidels; as when St. Paul inscribes his Epistle to the church of Corinth, *together with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place;*[p] and

* Neque igitur Dominus, neque Spiritus Sanctus, neque Apostoli eum, qui non esset Deus, definitive et absolute Deum nominassent, nisi esset verus Deus.—*Iren.* iii. 6.——Nunquam prophetæ, neque apostoli alium Deum nominaverunt, vel Dominum appellaverunt, præter verum, et solum Deum.—*Idem,* lib. iii. cap. 8.

[h] Isa. xlv. 6, 18; Deut. vi. 4.

[i] Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16.

[j] Mal. iii. 1; Matt. iii. 3.

[k] 1 Cor. xv. 47; Acts x. 36; Rom. x. 12; 1 Cor. viii. 6.

* Θεοῦ ἐστι μόνον τὸ προσκυνεῖσθαι. κτίσματι κτίσμα οὐ προσκυνεῖ, ἀλλὰ δοῦλος δεσπότην, καὶ κτίσμα Θεόν.—Athan. in Ar. Or. iii. p. 394.

† Οὗτοι δὲ κτίσμα λέγοντες εἶναι τὸν κύριον, καὶ ὡς κτίσματι λατρεύοντες αὐτῷ, τί διαφέρουσιν ἑλλήνων;—Idem, Or. i. p. 296.

‡ Τὴν τε γὰρ τοῦ πατρὸς βασιλείαν βασιλεύων ὁ υἱὸς ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτὸν θρόνον τῷ πατρὶ κάθηται.—Idem, Or. ii.

[l] 1 Cor. ii. 8; Psal. xxiv. 9; Jude 4; Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16.

[m] Matt. iv. 10.

[n] Heb. i. 6; Rev. v. 12, 13; iv. 11; *vide* Rev. i. 5.

* Rev. xxii. 3.

[p] 1 Cor. i. 2.

when Saul is said to *have authority from the chief priests to bind all that called upon his name*, so that we need not to allege the single example of St. Stephen invoking our Lord.[q] Indeed himself informs us, that *the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*[r] To wish and pray for *grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ* is the usual practice of the apostles, and to dispense them is a prerogative of his common to him with God his Father.[s] To have the same Holy Spirit as the Father unmeasurably, and to send it from himself, with commissions and instructions, and to communicate it freely, are especial characters of supreme divinity, and much transcending any creature, as St. Athanasius observes: *With authority* (saith he) *to give the Spirit doth not suit a creature, or a thing made, but is an endowment of God.** Whereas also we are often severely prohibited from relying or confiding upon any man, or any creature (as in that of the prophet, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm;*[t]) we are yet allowed, yea, we are obliged, to repose our trust and confidence in Christ: *Ye trust in God*, saith he himself to his disciples, *trust also in me;* whence St. Paul calleth him emphatically *our hope*, in his compellation to Timothy; *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope;*[u] which is the same title that Jeremiah attributes unto God: *O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble.*[v] Hence to him, jointly with God the Father, the divine Spirit, that solemn benediction or prayer is directed; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all;*[w] as also a parity of highest adoration is then together with the same divine persons yielded to him, when we are baptized in his name, and consecrated to his service.

The divinest attributes of God are also in the most absolute manner and perfect degree assigned to him: eternity, as we discoursed before. Immensity of presence and power, then implied, when speaking with the Jews he told them that he was then in heaven;[x] and when he promises his disciples, that *he will be with them, whenever they meet in his name:* and also, *that he will be with them, to the end of the world.*[y] Infinite wisdom and knowledge; *for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;* and, *Now are we sure* (say the disciples to him in St. John) *that thou knowest all things:*[z] and, *Lord* (saith St. Peter) *thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee:* and St. Paul calls him *the wisdom of God*, and *the power of God:*[a] wherefore since God's wisdom is omniscient, and his power omnipotent, so consequently is he. In short, whatever attribute or perfection God hath, the same hath he; for, *All things* (saith he) *that the Father hath are mine.*[b] What creature without high presumption could say those words concerning the divine Spirit; *He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.*[c]

The divine attributes he expresseth by divinest operations and works, which are ascribed to him. It is a most divine work to create; this we showed before to have been performed by him: to sustain, and conserve things in being, is another like work; this he doth: *For he* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *upholdeth all things by the word of his power;*[d] and, *By him* (saith St. Paul) *all things consist.*[e] To perform miracles, or do things surmounting the laws and thwarting the course of nature; such as by mere word and will rebuking winds and seas, curing diseases, ejecting devils, is the property of him who, as the Psalmist says, *alone doth great wonders.* Particularly to raise the dead is a prerogative reserved by God in his own hand;

* Τὸ δὲ μετ' ἐξουσίας διδόναι τὸ πνεῦμα, οὐ κτίσματος, οὐδὲ ποιήματός ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ Θεοῦ δῶρον.—Ath. Orat. iii. in Ar. p. 388.

[q] Acts ix. 14, 21; Rom. x. 12, 13, 14; 2 Tim. ii. 22. [r] John v. 23, 24; 2 John iii.

[s] Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. xiii.; 2 Thess. ii. 16; 1 Thess. iii. 12; Tit. iii. 6.

[t] Jer. xvii. 5; John xiv. 1.

[u] Col. i. 27; 1 Tim. i. 1. [v] Jer. xiv. 8.

[w] 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

[x] John iii. 13.

[y] Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20.

[z] Col. ii. 3; John xvi. 30; xxi. 17.

[a] 1 Cor. i. 24. [b] John xvi. 15.

[c] John xvi. 14. [d] Heb. i. 3.

[e] Col. i. 17.

(for, *The Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*[f]) This our Lord often did at his pleasure; for, *As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will:* and of himself he saith in the Apocalypse, *I have the keys of hell and of death.*[g] Especially to raise himself, which he assumeth to himself; *I*, saith he, *lay down my life, that I may take it up again; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again:*[h] and, *Demolish this temple*, saith he again, *and in three days I will rear it:*[i] which it was impossible for him to do, and unintelligible how it should be done, otherwise than by the divinity resident in him. To be καρδιογνώστης, searching men's hearts and discerning their secret thoughts, is a peculiar work of him that saith, *I the Lord try the heart, I search the reins;* and of our Lord it is said, *He needed not that any should witness about man, for he knew what was in man:*[j] and by many experiments he declared this power. To foresee and foretell future contingencies to be peculiar to himself, God signified when in the prophet he thus challenged the objects of heathen worship; *Show the things to come, that we may know ye are gods.*[k] This our Lord did upon several occasions, particularly in the case of Judas's treason: *He knew* (saith St. John) *from the beginning, who they were who did not believe, and who it was that should betray him.*[l] This, I say, he did, not as the prophets, by particular arbitrary revelation, but immediately by his owin Spirit; whereby even the prophets themselves were illustrated and inspired; for it was, as St. Peter says, *The Spirit of Christ in them which testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow.*[m] To see and know God (*who inhabits inaccessible light*) is beyond a creature's capacity and state, and yet belongs to him; *None* (saith he) *hath seen the Father, save he which is of God; he hath seen the Father:* and, *None knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*[n] To remit sins absolutely, he denied not to be the property of God, when his adversaries thus objected it; *Who can forgive sins, except God only?*[o] yet he assumed it to himself, and asserted it by a miracle. To save also, God declared to be a peculiar work of his, when he said it, and reiterated it in Isaiah and in Hosea:[p] *I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour;* which act yet, and which title, are no less proper to our Lord. In fine, briefly, he claims to himself at once the performance of every divine work, when he saith, *Whatsoever the Father doeth, that also doeth the Son likewise.*[q]

Now all this state and majesty, all these glorious titles, attributes, and works, can we imagine that he *whose name is jealous*, as it is in Exodus xxxiv. 14; and *who is jealous of his name*,[r] as it is in Ezekiel xxxix. 25; who said it once and again in the prophet Isaiah, that *he will not give his glory to another;*[s] can we conceive, I say, that he should communicate them, or should suffer them to be ascribed to any mere creature, how eminent soever in nature or worth, how dear soever upon any regard? for indeed the highest creature producible must be infinitely distant from him, infinitely inferior to him, infinitely base and mean in comparison to him, as to any true perfection or dignity; nor therefore can any creature be in nature capable of such names, such characters, such prerogatives; nor can in any reason or justice accept or bear them. Our Saviour therefore, unto whom by divine allowance and injunction they are attributed, who willingly admits them, who clearly assumes them to himself, is truly God.*

5. Now the whole tenor of our religion (according to dictates of scripture most frequent and obvious) asserting the unity of God; our Saviour, therefore, being God, must of necessity partake the

[f] Psal. lxxii. 18; lxxxvi. 8, 10; cxxxvi. 4; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Deut. xxxii. 39.
[g] Rev. i. 18.
[h] John x. 17, 18.
[i] John ii. 19.
[j] Jer. vii. 10; John ii. 25.
[k] Isa. xli. 23.
[l] John vi. 64.
[m] 1 Pet. i. 11.

* Οὐδ' ἂν ἐτόλμησε δοῦλος ὢν, καὶ τῶν πολλῶν, εἷς ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τρίψεσθαι τοῦ δεσπότου.—Chrys. in John. i. 18.
[n] 1 Tim. vi. 16; John vi. 46; Matt. xi. 27.
[o] Mark ii. 7; Isa. xliii. 25.
[p] Isa. xliii. 11; xlv. 21; Hos. xiii. 4.
[q] John v. 19.
[r] Deut. vi. 15.
[s] Isa. xlii. 8; xlviii. 11.

same individual essence with God his Father; and it must be certainly true, which he affirmeth concerning himself, *I and the Father are one*,[t] (ἕν ἐσμὲν, are the same thing, or one in nature; not εἷς ἐσμὲν, the same in person, or manner of subsistence;) and what he again saith; *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;* and, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me;*[u] by the divine essence common to both.

Yet hath he not this essence from himself, but by communication: for, *As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given the Son to have life in himself.* And ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, he *that is*, or hath his essence, *from God*, is the periphrasis he gives of himself.[v] He is not first in order, as an original, but is *the image of the invisible God* (an image indeed most adequate and perfectly like, as having the very same nature and essence.) He is ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, *the effulgency of his Father's glory*, and χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, *the character*, or exact impression, *of his substance.*[w] He is the internal word, or mind of God, which resembles him, and yet is not different from him: he is the *life*, the *wisdom*, the *power* of God; which terms denote the most intrinsic and perfect unity. So the apostles, by the most apposite comparisons that nature affords, strive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour; the which is that generation, whereupon the relation about which we speak is founded; or because of which our Lord is most truly and properly called *the only begotten Son of God.* For, if to produce a like in any kind or degree, be to generate; then to give a being without any dissimilitude or disparity is the most proper generation: our Saviour therefore hence truly is the Son of God the Father. And that he is so only, that no other beside him hath been ever thus begotten, is evident; for that as no reason of ours could have informed us that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath showed us that any other hath been; and we therefore cannot without extreme temerity suppose it. We are sufficiently instructed that all other divine productions, together with the relations grounded on them, are different from this: by creation, things receive a being from God infinitely distant from, infinitely unequal and unlike to, the divine essence; and that *filiation*, or sonship, which doth stand upon adoption and grace, is wholly in kind different from this. And the communication of the divine essence jointly from the Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, doth in manner (although the manner thereof be wholly incomprehensible to us) so differ from this, that in the holy scripture (the only guide of our conception, and of our speech in matters of this nature, far surpassing our reason) it is never called generation; and therefore we must not presume to think or call it so.

But let so much suffice for explication of the point; a point represented in scripture so considerable, that the belief thereof (if it have that sincerity and that strength as to dispose our hearts to a due love and reverence of the Son of God, attended with, or attested to by, a faithful obedience to his laws) doth raise us also to the privilege of becoming the sons of God, and doth mystically unite us to him, and elevateth us above the world;* so doth St. John teach us: *To as many* (saith he) *as received him* (received him as the Son of God, or believed him to be so), *to them gave he the power* (or the privilege) *to become the sons of God:*[x] and, *Whosoever* (saith he) *shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God:*[y] and, *Who* (saith he again) *is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*[z] Of so great importance is the point. Of which I shall only now further briefly propose some practical applications.

1. We may hence learn whence the performances and the sufferings of Christ become of so high worth and so great

[t] John x. 30; 1 John v. 7.

[u] John xiv. 9; Rev. xxi. 22,—The Lord God Almighty is its temple and the Lamb.

[v] John v. 26; vi. 46.

[w] Col. i. 15; 2 Cor. iv. 4; John xiv. 9; Heb. i. 3.

* Ὅτι καὶ ἡμεῖς συμμορφούμενοι κατὰ χάριν, τὴν δι' αὐτοῦ, πρὸς τὴν τῆς υἱοθεσίας ἀναβαίνομεν δόξαν.—Cyril. Al.

[x] John i. 12.

[y] 1 John iv. 15.

[z] 1 John v. 5.

efficacy. *Wonder not* (saith St. Cyril the Catechist) *if the whole world was redeemed; for it was not a bare man, but the only Son of God, that died for it.** It is not so strange, that God's only Son's mediation should be so acceptable and so effectual with God; that the blood of God's dearest Son should be so precious in God's sight, that the intercession of one so near him should be so prevalent with him. What could God refuse to the Son of his love, earnestly soliciting and suing in our behalf! what debts might not so rich a price discharge! what anger could not so noble a sacrifice appease! what justice could not so full a dispensation satisfy! *We were not* (St. Peter telleth us) *redeemed with corruptible things, with silver or gold* (no; whole Indies of such stuff would not have been sufficient to ransom one soul;) *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*[a] It was not, as the apostle to the Hebrews remarketh, by the *blood of goats and heifers* that our sins were expiated (no; whole hecatombs would have nothing availed to that purpose;) but *by the blood of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered up himself spotless unto God*[b] (who as the eternal Son of God did offer himself a sacrifice not to be blamed or refused.) *It is* (as St. John saith) *the blood of Christ, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all sin.*[c] And well indeed might a Person so infinitely noble, worthy, and excellent, be a sufficient ransom for whole worlds of miserable offenders and captives. Well might his voluntary undergoing such inconveniences and infirmities of life, his suffering so disgraceful and painful a death, countervail the deserved punishment of all mankind; well might his so humble, so free, so perfect submission to God's will, infinitely please God, and render him propitious to us; *well might* (as St. Athanasius speaks) *the very appearing of such a Saviour in the flesh be a general ransom of sin, and become salvation to every creature.* The which St. Paul thus expresseth: *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:** for if our displeasing, injuring, and dishonouring him, who is so great and so good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and dignity of the Person, submitting in our behalf to the performance of all due obedience and all proper satisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation offered, and compensate the wrong done to God. Well, therefore, may we believe, and say with comfort, after the apostle: *Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν; Who shall criminate against the elect of God? it is God that justifieth* (it is the Son of God, it is God himself, who satisfies divine justice for us;) *who is there that condemns? it is Christ that died.*[d]

2. We may hence be informed, what reverence and adoration is due from us to our Saviour, and why we *must honour the Son, even as we honour the Father;* why even all *the angels* must *worship him;* why *every thing in heaven, and earth, and beneath the earth, must bend the knee* (that is, must yield veneration and observance) *to him;*[e] why *by all creatures* whatever the same pre-eminence is to be ascribed, and the same adoration paid jointly and equally *to God the Father Almighty, who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb,* his blessed Son, who *standeth at his right hand.*[f] Such divine glory and worship we are obliged to yield him, because he is the Son of God, one in essence, and therefore equal in majesty, with his Father: were it not so, it would be injury to God, and sacrilege, to do it; God would not *impart his glory,* we should not attribute it unto another. So this consideration grounds our duty and justifies our practice of worshipping our Lord; it also encourages us to perform it with faith and hope; for thence we may be assured, that he, being the Son of God omniscient, doth hear and mind us: being the Son of God omnipotent, he can thoroughly help and save us; being also, as such, absolutely and immensely good, he will be always disposed to af-

* Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμος ὅλος ἐλυτρώθη, οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ψιλὸς, ἀλλ' υἱὸς Θεοῦ μονογενὴς, ὁ ὑπεραποθνήσκων, &c.—Cyrill. Catech. 13.

[a] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; Psal. xlix. 7.

[b] Heb. ix. 12, 13, 14; x. 4, 8, 10.

[c] 1 John i. 7.

* Ἡ ἐνσαρκος παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος θανάτου λύτρον, καὶ κτίσεως πάσης σωτηρία γέγονεν.—Athan. ad Adelph. Rom. viii. 3.

[d] Rom. viii. 33.

[e] John v. 23; Heb. i. 6; Phil. ii. 10.

[f] Rev. v. 13.

ford what is good and convenient for us in our need.

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God toward us, and our correspondent obligation to love and thankfulness toward him.[g] *In this* (saith St. John) *was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. In this* (adds he) *is love* (love indeed, love admirable and inconceivable) *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten Son to be a propitiation for our sins.*[h] Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, as for a prince, himself glorious and happy, most freely to deliver up, out from his own bosom, his own only most dearly beloved Son, to the suffering most base contumelies and most grievous pains for the welfare of his enemies, of rebels and traitors to him? Even such hath been God's goodness to us: the Son of God, the heir of eternal majesty, was by his Father sent down from heaven (from the bosom of his glory and bliss) to put on the form of a servant, to endure the inconveniences of this mortal state, to undergo the greatest indignities and sorrows; that we, *who were alienated, and enemies in our mind by wicked works might be reconciled to God;*[i] might be freed from wrath and misery; might be capable of everlasting life and salvation. Suitable to such unexpressible goodness ought our gratitude to be toward God: what affectionate sense in our hearts, what thankful acknowledgments with our mouths, what dutiful observance in all our actions, doth so wonderful an instance of mercy and goodness deserve and require from us?

4. This consideration may fitly serve to beget in us hope and confidence in God upon any occasions of need or distress; to support and comfort us in all our afflictions: for, *He that so loved us, that he gave his only begotten Son for our salvation and happiness,*[j] how can we ever suspect him as unwilling to bestow on us whatever else shall to his wisdom appear needful or convenient for us? He that out of pure charity and pity toward us did part with a jewel so inestimable, how can any thing seem much for him to give us? It is the consolatory discourse of St. Paul: *He* (saith the apostle) *that did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?*[k] all things that we truly need, all things that we can reasonably desire, all things which are good and fit for us.

5. St. John applieth this consideration to the begetting charity in us toward our brethren: *Beloved* (saith he) *if God so loved us* (as to send his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him), *we ought also to love one another.*[l] If God so lovingly gave up his only Son for our sakes, what (in grateful regard to him, in observant imitation of him), what expressions, I say, of charity and goodwill ought we to yield toward our brethren? what endeavours, what goods, what life of ours should seem too dear unto us for to expend or impart for their good? Shall we be unwilling to take any pains or suffer any loss for them, for whom (together with ourselves) the Son of God hath undergone so much trouble, so much disgrace, so much hardship? shall we, I say, be uncharitable, when the Son of God hath laid upon us such an obligation, hath set before us such an example?

6. This consideration also may inform us, and should mind us, concerning the dignity of our nature and of our condition; and consequently how in respect to them we should behave ourselves. If God did so much consider and value man, as for his benefit to debase his only Son; if the Son of God himself hath deigned to assume our nature, and to advance it into a conjunction with the divine nature, then is man surely no inconsiderable or contemptible thing; then should we despise no man whom God hath so regarded and so honoured; then ought we not to neglect or slight ourselves: if we were worthy of God's so great care, we ought not to seem unworthy of our own. We ought to value ourselves; not so, indeed, as to be proud of so undeserved honour, but so as to be sensible thereof, and to suit our demeanour thereto. Reflecting upon these things should make us to dis-

[g] Tit. iii. 4; Eph. ii. 4.
[h] 1 John iv. 9, 10.
[i] Col. i. 21; 1 John iv. 9.
[j] John iii. 1, 6.
[k] Rom. viii. 32.
[l] 1 John iv. 12.

dain to do any thing unworthy that high regard of God, and that honourable alliance unto him. It should breed in us noble thoughts, worthy desires, and all excellent dispositions of soul conformable to such relations; it should engage us into a constant practice, beseeming them whom God hath so dignified, whom the Son of God hath vouchsafed to make his brethren:[m] by affecting any thing mean or sordid, by doing any thing base or wicked, we greatly undervalue ourselves, we much disparage that glorious family, into which, by the Son of God's incarnation, we are inserted. *Ταύτης οὖν τῆς τιμῆς ἀξίαν τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιδειξώμεθα, καὶ μηδὲν ἔχωμεν κοινὸν πρὸς τὴν γῆν. Let us therefore* (saith St. Chrysostom) *show a philosophy worthy of this honour; having nothing common with this earth.* (In Joh. i. Hom. 18.)

7. This consideration doth much aggravate all impiety and sin. Wilful sin upon this account appeareth not only disobedience to our Creator and natural Lord, but enormous offence against the infinite bounty and mercy and condescension of our Saviour; a most heinous abusing the Son of God, who came down into this homely and humble state on purpose *to bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities;*[n] to free us from the grievous dominion and from the woful effects of sin; we thereby frustrate the most gracious intentions of God, and defeat the most admirable project that could be for our benefit and salvation; we thereby *trample upon the Son of God, recrucify him, and put him to open shame.*[o] So the apostle to the Hebrews telleth us, implying the heinous guilt and sad consequence of doing so: *He* (saith the apostle) *that despised Moses's law, died without mercy;—Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?*[p]

8. Lastly, this consideration may serve to beget in us a high esteem of the dispensation evangelical, and hearty submission thereto. Almighty God (as is signified in the parable,[q]) after several provisions for the good of mankind, and several messages from heaven to the world heretofore, did at last send his Son, with this expectation; *Surely they will reverence my Son:* and surely much reason he had to expect the greatest reverence to be yielded to his person; the readiest credence and obedience to his word. For if any declaration of God concerning his will, of our duty, however proceeding from him (either by dictate of natural reason, or by the instruction of prophets, or by the ministry of angels), ought to be entertained with great respect and observance; much more should the overtures of greatest mercy and favour exhibited by his own Son (on purpose sent unto us to discover them) be embraced with highest regard, and humblest reverence, and most hearty compliance. It is the Apostle to the Hebrews his discourse and inference: *Therefore*, saith he, (therefore, because *God hath in these last times spoken unto us by his Son*), *we ought περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, to give more* (abundant, or more) *earnest heed to the things which we have heard; for* (subjoins he) *how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at first began to be spoken by* (*our*) *Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?*[r] *Ταῦτ' οὖν διηνεκῶς στρέφοντες, καὶ ἀναλογιζόμενοι ἐκκαθάρωμεν ἡμῶν τὸν βίον, καὶ λαμπρὸν ποιήσωμεν. Continually, therefore, revolving and recounting these things, let us cleanse our life, and make it bright:* so we conclude with good St. Chrysostom.[s]

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him; grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children, by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

[m] Heb. ii. 11.
[n] Acts iii. 26; Rom. vi. 22.
[o] Heb. vi. 6.
[p] Heb x. 28.
[q] Luke xx. 13.
[r] Heb. i. 2; ii. 1, 3.
[s] *Vide* Chrys. tom. vi. p. 623, &c.

Our Lord.

SERMON XXII.

EPHESIANS iv. 5.—*One Lord.*

As the name of *God* (truly common to all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity) is (not in way of exclusion, but) according to a mysterious peculiarity (κατ' οἰκονομίαν, in way of dispensation, accommodated to our instruction, as the Greek fathers express it) attributed to God the Father, who is the Fountain of the Deity, and first in order among the divine Persons;[a] so likewise is the name *Lord*, truly common to the other Persons, peculiarly (though also not exclusively) ascribed and appropriated unto God the Son; who therefore, in the style of the New Testament, which more fully hath revealed him, is called sometimes absolutely *Lord*, sometimes *the Lord Jesus*, sometimes *our Lord;* to acknowledge and call him so, being the especial duty, and the distinctive mark or character of a Christian: for, *to us*, as *there is one God and Father of all*, and *one Holy Spirit*, so there is, as St. Paul here in my text doth say, *one Lord.* And otherwhere; *There be* (saith he, there be, according to popular estimation and worldly use) *gods many, and lords many; but to us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.*[b] Hence to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (that is, by confession and practice to acknowledge him *our Lord*) gives a peraphrasis, or description of a Christian (*To the church of God that is in Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place;*[c] that is, together with all Christians every where; so doth St. Paul inscribe his First Epistle to the Corinthians;) whence, *No man* (saith he in the same Epistle) *can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;*[d] that is, no man can heartily embrace Christianity without the gracious assistance of God's holy Spirit. The reason of which appellation being so peculiarly attributed unto Christ, may be, for that, beside the natural right unto dominion over us, necessarily appertaining to him as our God, who hath made us, and doth preserve us, there are divers other respects and grounds supervenient, and accruing to him from what he hath undertaken, performed, and undergone for us, in spontaneous obedience to the will of God his Father, upon which also the title of *Lord* is due unto him: the which to declare first, then to apply them unto our practice, shall be the subject and scope of our present Discourse.

In whatsoever notion we take the word *Lord*, either as a prince over subjects, or as a master over servants, or as an owner of goods, or as a preceptor and president over disciples, or as a leader and captain to followers, or as a person singularly eminent above inferiors, he is according to all such notions truly *our Lord.*

According to whatever capacity we distinctively or abstractively consider him, either as the *Son of God*, or as the *Son of man*, or as Θεάνθρωπος, (jointly *God and man*, united in one person), as *Jesus* our Saviour, as *the Christ of God*, he is *our Lord.*

If we examine all imaginable foundations of just dominion, eminence in nature and power, the collation of being or preservation thereof, donation, conquest, purchase, merit, voluntary compact; upon all these he hath a right of lordship over us duly grounded.

1. He is, I say, first, *our Lord* according to every notion and acceptation of the word *Lord.*

He is our Prince and Governor, we are his subjects and vassals; for to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the scepire of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.*[e] Of him it was prophesied, that *the government should be upon his shoulder*, and that *of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end;* he is *the King of Israel*, or of the church, who, as the angel told the blessed Virgin, *shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever. God hath given him head over all things to the church.*[f] So is he a Prince most absolute, endued with sovereign right and

[a] Luke ii. 11, Ὅς ἐστι Χριστὸς, Κύριος.
[b] 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. [c] 1 Cor. i. 2; Acts ix 14.
[d] 1 Cor. xii. 3.

[e] Heb. i. 8. [f] Isa. ix. 6, 7.

power, crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all pre-eminences, and exercising all acts suitable to regal dignity, in respect to all things, and particularly in regard to us.[g]

He also is our Master, and we are his servants; the church is a house and family, whereof he is the οἰκοδεσπότης, or householder:[h] *If* (saith he) *they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household?*[i] (τοὺς οἰκιακοὺς αὐτοῦ, *famulos ejus*, his domestics, or menial servants.) *All the family in heaven and earth are named of him*, saith St. Paul;[j] that is, the whole church (both triumphant above in heaven, and militant here on earth) is his family, or called the family of him, as of its Lord. *Christ* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *is as a son over his house, whose house are we:*[k] *He that is called free is a servant of Christ:* and, *We serve the Lord Christ:* and *We have a Master in heaven*, saith St. Paul: *Blessed*, (saith our Lord himself) *is that servant, whom his Lord coming shall find so doing;*[l] that is, whom *Christ, our Lord*, coming to judgment, shall find discharging his duty faithfully. He indeed as a good Master governeth, ordereth, and maintaineth his family well; furnisheth and feedeth it with all necessary provisions; protecteth it from all want and all mischief; appointeth to every one therein his due work and service, and payeth to each his due wages and recompense.[m]

He is also our Owner, or the Possessor and Proprietary of us; *The Lord that bought us*,[n] as St. Peter calls him; and consequently, who possesseth and enjoyeth us. *We are not our own* (saith St. Paul;) *for we were bought with a price:*[o] whence we are become entirely subject to his disposal.

He likewise is our Preceptor, or Teacher; that is, the Lord of our understanding, which is subject to the belief of his dictates; and the Lord of our practice, which is to be directed by his precepts. *Ye* (saith he) *call me Master, and Lord* (διδάσκαλον, καὶ κύριον, *Doctor* and *Lord*), *and ye say well, for so I am:*[p] and, *Be ye not called masters* (καθηγηταί, guides in doctrine), *for one is your Master, even Christ:*[q] and, *Every thought of ours* (saith St. Paul[r]) is to be *captivated* to the *obedience of Christ*. Such, as infallibly wise and perfectly veracious, he necessarily is unto us; such he is, as sent on purpose by God to enlighten our minds with the knowledge of heavenly truth, and *to guide our feet into the ways of peace;*[s] whence we cannot but be obliged to embrace his doctrine, and to observe the rules which he prescribeth us.

He is therefere also our Captain and Leader; whose orders we must observe, whose conduct we should follow, whose pattern we are to regard and imitate in all things: he is styled ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, *the Captain of our faith;* ἀρχεγὸς ζωῆς, *the Captain of our life;* ἀρχηγὸς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of our salvation;* ἀρχιποίμην, our *chief Shepherd*, the *Apostle and High-Priest of our profession;* the *Bishop of our souls*. In fine, he, according to what St. Paul says, ἐν πᾶσι πρωτεύει, *hath in all things the primacy* and *pre-eminence;* so that according to all notions and senses of *lordship* he is our Lord;[t] but chiefly he is meant such in the principal sense, as having an absolute right and power to command and govern us.

II. *Christ* is also *our Lord* according to every capacity or respect of *nature* or *office*, that we can consider appertaining to him.

1. He is *our Lord* as by *nature* the *Son of God*, partaking of the divine essence and perfections: he as such being endued with eminence superlative and with power irresistible; as such having created all things, and upholding all things; whence all things necessarily and justly are subject to his order and disposal; all things according to all right and reason are to be governed, possessed, and used according to his pleasure. Hence is that most august and most peculiar name, *JEHOVAH* (denoting either independency and indefectibility of subsis-

[g] Luke i. 33; Eph. i. 22; 1 Cor. xv. 27.
[h] 1 Tim. iii. 15. [i] Matt. xxiv. 45; x. 25.
[j] Eph. iii. 15. [k] Heb. iii. 6.
[l] 1 Cor. vii. 22; Col. iii. 24; Eph. vi. 9; Col. iv. 1; Matt. xxiv. 46.
[m] 1 Cor. iii. 8; Luke vi. 35; Rev. xxii. 12.
[n] 2 Pet. ii. 1. [o] 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; vii. 23.
[p] John xiii. 13. [q] Matt. xxiii. 10.
[r] 2 Cor. x. 5. [s] John i.; Luke i. 79.
[t] 1 Pet. ii. 21; Heb. xii. 2; ii. 10; Acts iii. 15; v. 31; 1 Pet. ii. 25; v. 4; Heb. iii. 1; Col. i. 18.

tence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in operation, or both of them together; which, therefore, is by the Greek interpreters fitly rendered Κύριος, and after them *Lord* by our translators; for the word κύρειν doth signify to subsist, and κύρος is used to denote efficacy, ratification, steadfast power or authority) assigned to him: *This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*, saith Jeremiah of him: and *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God*,[u] saith God in Hosea concerning the salvation accomplished by him: and in the prophet Zechariah he thus speaks of himself: *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee:*[v] where it is said that Jehovah, being sent by Jehovah, should come and dwell in the church, enlarged by accession of the Gentiles: who can that be, but *our Lord Christ*, who dwelt among us, and was by God his Father sent unto us? And what in the Old Testament is spoken of Jehovah, is by infallible expositors in the New attributed to our Lord: *Sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth, and he shall be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence;*[w] so did Isaiah speak; and his words are by St. Peter and by St. Paul applied to *Christ*. *Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be delivered;*[x] so did the prophet Joel foretell concerning the latter days; and St. Paul accommodates it to the salvation obtained by confessing the name of Christ.[y] In Malachi, Jehovah saith, that *he would send his messenger to prepare his way before him;* this, according to the Evangelist's interpretation, was verified in St. John the Baptist's *preparing the way before* our Saviour. Likewise, what Isaiah said, *The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, Prepare the way of Jehovah*, is by all the Evangelists applied to the Baptist, as *the voice crying*, and to our Saviour, as the *Lord coming: Christ* therefore is the *Lord Jehovah*, independent and immutable in essence and in power.[z]

The word *Adon* also, which more immediately and properly doth signify *dominion* (and which put absolutely doth belong to God), is plainly attributed to our Saviour: *The Lord* (*Jehovah*) *said to my Lord* (*le adonai;*) that is, God the Father said to Christ the Son, yet Lord of David, as our Saviour himself expounds it.[a] And, *The Lord* (*ha Adon*) *shall come to his temple;*[a] so in Malachi it is prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. According to this notion was it, that St. Thomas, being by our Saviour's resurrection convinced of his divinity, cried out, *My God, and my Lord:* in this sense it was, that St. Peter called our Saviour *Lord*, when he ascribed omniscience to him, saying, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*[c] Upon this account, St. John the Baptist said, *He that cometh from above is above all things*, which St. Paul expresseth thus: *The second man is the Lord from heaven.* So is *Christ*, as he is God, *our Lord.*[d]

2. He is also our Lord as *man*, by the voluntary appointment and free donation of God his Father; in regard to the excellency of his Person, and to the merit of his performances. God did by gift and delegation confer upon him a supereminent degree of dignity and authority, with power to execute the most lordly acts of enacting, of dispensing with, and of abrogating laws; of judging, of remitting offences; of dispensing rewards, and of punishing transgressors. The scripture is copious and emphatical in declaring this point both in general terms and with respect to particulars: *Let all the house of Israel* (saith St. Peter) *know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ, even this Jesus, whom ye did crucify;* and, *Thou hast given him power over all flesh: All things are delivered unto me by my Father; All power is given me in heaven, and upon earth: The Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand;* saith he concerning himself; and, *Being found in fashion as a*

[u] Jer. xxiii. 6; Hos i. 7.
[v] Zech. x. 12, Jehovah à Jehova.—Gen. xix. 24, apud Iren. iii. 6.
[w] Isa. viii. 13, 14.
[x] 1 Pet. ii. 7; Rom. ix. 33.
[y] Joel ii. 32; Rom. x. 9, 10, 13.
[z] Mal. iii. 1; Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 2, 3; John i. 23; Luke vii. 27; iii. 4; Isa. xl. 3.
[a] Psal. cx. 1; Matt. xxii. 43.
[b] Mal. iii. 1. [c] John xx. 28; xxi. 17.
[d] John. iii. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 47.

man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord:[e] and, *God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church:*[f] and, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour:*[g] and, *The lamb which was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blessing:* and, *When the Son of man sits upon the throne of his glory, he shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*[h] In which places, as in others of the same importance, it is signified generally, that beside the dominion, naturally belonging to our Saviour as God, there hath been conferred on him, as man, an universal dominion over all things in regard to what, as man, he did and suffered: and that in him, as the Apostle to the Hebrews observeth and discourseth, that hath been signally fulfilled which the Psalmist acknowledgeth, and praiseth God for, in respect to man: *Thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand, and didst put all things in subjection under his feet.*[i] In him also was accomplished the prophetical vision of Daniel: *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*[j]

It is also particularly expressed of him, that to him, as man, is committed a power legislative; *I say unto you*, I command you, is the style he commonly used: and, *The son of man*, said he, *is Lord of the sabbath;*[k] (that is, hath a power to dispense with the observation thereof, or to abrogate the positive law concerning it; which by parity of reason infers a general power of constituting and rescinding laws of the like nature.) The prerogative also of remitting sins was given him: *That ye may* (saith he) *know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins* (*then saith he to the sick of the palsy*), *Arise, take up thy bed, and walk:* and, *The God of our fathers* (saith St. Peter), *hath raised Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree; him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.*[l] The administration of justice and judgment he thus also hath; for he is, ὡρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κριτής, *ordained by God the Judge of quick and dead;*[m] God hath appointed to judge the world, ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισε, *by the man whom he hath ordained: The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son—and hath given him authority to execute judgment also*, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστί· *because*, or whereas, *he is the Son of man:*[n] so also for the prerogative of distributing rewards and inflicting punishments: *The Son of man* (saith he) *shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and shall reward every man according to his work.*[o] Thus by emphatical expression it is signified, that Christ, *as man*, is our *Lord*, by God's appointment and donation. We may also consider, that our Saviour, *as the Son of David*, and consequently by a right of succession, according to divine ordination, *as King of Israel* (to the which all Christians are become proselytes; for προσεληλύθατε Σιὼν ὄρει, *Ye are proselytes to mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem*,[p] saith the Apostle to the Hebrews), is our Lord; according to that of the angel to the blessed Virgin, *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of*

[e] Acts ii. 36; John xvii. 2; Luke x. 22; Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18; John iii. 35; xiii. 3; Phil. ii. 8-11.
[f] Eph. i. 20; 1 Pet. iii. 22. [g] Heb. ii. 9.
[h] Rev. v. 12; Matt. xix. 28; xxv. 31; xxvi. 64.
[i] Heb. ii. 7, 8; Psal. viii. 7.
[j] Dan. vii. 13, 14.
[k] John xv. 10, 12, 14.
[l] Matt. ix. 6; Luke v. 24; Acts v. 30, 31.
[m] Acts x. 42; xvii. 31. [n] John v. 22, 27.
[o] Matt. xvi. 27. [p] Heb. xii. 22.

the Highest; and the Lord God shall give him the thorne of David his Father; and he shall reign over the house of Israel for ever and ever: Of the increase of his government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever:[q] so Isaiah foretold of him; and many like passages occur in other prophets.

3. He also considered as *Θεάνθρωπος* (*as God and man* united in one Person) is plainly our Lord. For whatever naturally did appertain to God, whatever freely (was in way of gift or reward) communicated to man, doth accrue to the Person, and is attributed thereto, in consequence of the union hypostatical, or pesonal. It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Christ Jesus* became capable of so high preferments; wherefore most properly upon this consideration is Christ *the Lord of all* (as St. Peter styles him;) *having all things* (*him only excepted, who did subject all things to him*) *put under his feet.*[r]

4. If we also consider him as *Jesus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence resulteth a title thereto: nothing more becomes a *Lord*, than to protect and save; none better deserves the right and the name of a *Lord*, than a Saviour; wherefore those titles are well conjoined; *I am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour*, saith God in Isaiah of himself; and, *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to his right hand*, saith St. Peter concerning Jesus.[s]

5. Lilkewise if he be considered as *the Christ*, that especially implieth him anointed, and consecrated to sovereign dominion, as king of the church: well therefore did the angel express his joyful message when he told the shepherds: *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord;* and St. Peter well joined them, saying, *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* Thus in all respects is *Christ* our *Lord.*[t]

III. Let us also further briefly survey the several grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we shall see that upon all accounts he is our *Lord.*

1. An uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion; he that is endued therewith, it is necessary that we should submit to him, it is reasonable willingly to admit him for our Lord: persons so qualified, Aristotle telleth us, have a natural title to dominion;* as, on the contrary, persons weak (in power or in wisdom), unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things, are naturally subjects and servants. This ground eminently agrees to him, as being by nature the Almighty God, who can do all things, whom nothing can resist; and also for that *all things are given into his hand,*[u] all things are put under his feet. Hence he is most able to protect us; *the gates of hell cannot prevail against his church; none can snatch us out of his hand; he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God through him.*[v]

2. To make, to preserve, to provide and dispense maintenance, are also clear grounds of dominion; for what can we more justly claim dominion over, than over our own inventions and works; over that which we continually keep and nourish; over that which wholly depends upon us, and subsists merely by our pleasure? Since then *in him we live, and move, and have our being;*[w] since we have derived all our being from him (our being natural as men, and spiritual as Christians), and are by him, *who upholdeth all things*, sustained therein; since, as to all our powers and in all our actions, we depend upon him; for *without him we can do nothing*, and *all our sufficiency*

[q] Luke i. 32; Isa. ix. 7; Acts ii. 30.
[r] Acts x. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 27.
[s] Isa. xliii. 11; Acts v. 31.

* Ὁ πρῶτος (ὡς ἔοικεν) καὶ κυριώτατος νόμος, τῷ σώζεσθαι δεομένῳ, τὸν σώζειν δυνάμενον, ἄρχοντα κατὰ φύσιν ἀποδίδωσι.—Plut. in Pelop.

Πρασήκει γοῦν ἀεὶ τῷ κρείττονι κατὰ φύσιν ἡγεῖσθαι τοῦ χείρονος.—Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. (p. 506.)

Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προορᾶν ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει.—Arist. Pol. i. 1, 3, 4.

[t] Luke ii. 11.
[u] John xiii. 3.
[v] Matt. xvi. 18; John x. 28; Heb. vii. 25.
[w] Acts xvii. 28.

is of him;[x] he surely is our Lord, having an absolute right to dispose of us, to order us, and to use us, according to his discretion and pleasure. We thence have reason to render that acknowledgment of the elders in the Revelation to him: *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory, and the honour, and the power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are, and they were created;*[y] to confess and celebrate him as our Lord, for that, as it is in the Psalm, *It is he that made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*[z] Thus by birth, and privilege of nature, as the Son of God, heir-apparent, and consort of eternal Majesty; thus also, as concurring with his Father in the divinest actions of creation and providence, is *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God, *our Lord.**

But beside these natural grounds of dominion over us, there are several others considerable, each of them, according to the standing rules of justice and equity, sufficient to found a good title thereto. We (considering ourselves as the sons of Adam, in that state wherein Christ found us, or wherein we should now be, if he had not vouchsafed to come and redeem us) had attempted to withdraw ourselves from our due subjection to God, by wilful rebellion and disobedience; we thence had forfeited the benefit of God's favourable protection and providence for our good: we had become outlaws, dead in law (*dead in trespasses and sins;*[a]) we, instead of being subjects and servants of God, were become (or should have been) *aliens, and enemies to God by wicked works*, according to the natural *blindness of our minds not knowing* (or acknowledging) *God;*[b] in our affections estranged and averse from him, in our practice opposite to his holy will and righteous laws, we in a manner were got out of God's possession; were in respect to him become imbecile and *lost;* we were *like sheep gone astray* out of the fold of his gracious care and governance; we had got other masters, and were come into other hands; like those who in the prophet confess, *O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us.* The devil had got us into his power; we were *captivate* (or taken alive, as St. Paul phraseth it, ἐζωγρημένοι) *at his will;* we were detained under wretched subjection, overpowered, and oppressed by him; who therefore is called *the Prince* and *the God of this world;* to whose suggestions it hearkened, whose will it observed, whom it was prone even to worship and adore. The world also (whose *friendship is enmity to God*, which *all lieth in wickedness*) had prevailed over us, so as *to walk according to it;*[c] to be governed by its corrupt principles and vicious practices; to be driven by its force, and drawn by its allurements, into evil. We were captives and slaves also *to the law of sin ruling in our members; serving divers lusts and pleasures;*[d] being in our actions guided by a *carnal mind*, opposite to God and goodness; swayed by sensual appetites, and hurried by violent passions to what is bad: this was the condition of mankind generally when Christ came, and would have so continued; but out of it he came to deliver us; by the merit of his blood, and power of his grace, to free us from the oppressions of all those usurping powers; to recover and restore us into the propriety, possession, and protection of God. *He came to seek and to save that which was lost; to save us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to deliver us out of the power of darkness, and to translate us into his* own *kingdom*, the kingdom *of righteousness, peace, and joy.*[e] So that he hath acquired us to himself; we being now περιποίησις, *an acquist* made by him, as St. Paul calleth us, and λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, as St. Peter speaks, *a people by acquisition* peculiarly apper-

*Χριστὸς φύσει Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεὺς ἀΐδιος ὢν οὐχ ὅτε ἀπυστέλλεται μᾶλλον γίνεται Κύριος· οὐδὲ τότε ἀρχὴν λαμβάνει τοῦ εἶναι Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεύς, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἀεὶ, τοῦτο καὶ τότε κατὰ σάρκα πεποίηται· καὶ λυτρωσάμενος πάντας γίνεται καὶ οὕτως ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν Κύριος.—Ath. Orat. iii. in Ar. pag. 385.

[x] Heb. i. 3; Col. i. 17; John xv. 5; 2 Cor. iii. 5.

[y] Rev. iv. 11.

[z] Psal. c. 3.

[a] Eph. ii, 1, 5.

[b] Col. i. 21; Rom. viii. 7, 8, 9.

[c] Luke xix. 10; Matt. xviii. 11; x. 6; xv. 24; Psal. cxix. 176; Isa. xxvi. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 26; Acts x. 38; Col. ii. 13; John xiv. 30; xvi. 11; Eph. vi. 12; ii. 2; 2 Cor. iv. 4; James iv. 4; 1 John ii. 15; 1 John v. 19; Eph. ii. 2; Rom. vii. 23; vi. 12, 16, &c.; Tit. iii. 3.

[d] Rom. viii. 7, 8.

[e] Luke xix. 10; Matt. x. 6; Luke i. 71; Col. i. 13.

taining to him: and divers ways we have been acquired to him, as to our Lord.[f]

1. He hath acquired us by free donation from God his Father; for *God hath given him power over all flesh; God hath delivered all things into his hand; God hath subjected all things under his feet.*[g] Peculiarly, God hath given unto him those who comply with his gracious invitations and suggestions; his *sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him;*[h] them hath God given him, to govern them with especial favour, and keep them with a particular care: *Whom* (saith he) *thou hast given me, I have kept;* and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.*[i]

2. Again, he hath acquired us by just *right* of *conquest*, having subdued those enemies unto whom (partly by their fraud and violence, partly from our own will and consent) we did live enslaved and addicted: them he vanquished, *having spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them.*[j] Whence we rightly fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory; having formerly belonged to his enemies, and having by his mercy been preserved: he might justly have deprived us of liberty and of life; might have utterly destroyed us, or have detained us in woful misery, as dependents upon and partisans with his foes; ourselves together with them being found in open hostility against him: but *according to his great mercy he saved us;* and did put us into a capacity of a free, comfortable, and happy life under him, *calling us to his kingdom and glory.*[k] We therefore being *subacti potentia* (subdued by his power), become *jure subditi* (in right subject to him), [being *servati*, we are made *servi;*] being saved from death by him, we according to justice and reason become vassals to him, so that all our life should be devoted to his service; that (as it is in the hymn *Benedictus*) *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies* (his enemies, and our enemies also, no less in truth and effect), *we should serve him without fear.*[l]

3. He hath also further acquired us to himself by *purchase;* having by a great price bought us, ransomed us out of sad captivity, and redeemed us from grievous punishment due to us. We, as heinous sinners and rebels, had forfeited our lives to God's law, and were sentenced unto a miserable death; we had lost our liberty, and were thrown into a grievous prison, fettered in guilt, lying under wrath, and reserved to punishment unavoidable; we were stripped of all goods, all comfort, all hope and remedy:[m] such was the case of man, when he procured a redemption, a pardon, a deliverance, and restitution for us; delivering up himself *a ransom for us all;*[n] undergoing a punishment for our sins, discharging our debts, propitiating divine justice, acquitting us from all claims and pretences upon us;[o] yea meriting for us a better state than we did ever before stand in: thus *he purchased his church with his own blood;* whence, as St. Paul argues, *we are not our own, for we are bought with a price.**[p] In requital for such mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we cannot, either in gratitude or justice, owe less than ourselves to be his, rendered up wholly to his dominion and disposal; it is our duty therefore to be subjects and servants; and it was indeed the intent of his doing so much for us, that we should be so: he did all *gratis* (most freely), as to any precedent motive beside his own goodness; but he would not do it fruitlessly, as to effect: *To this end* (saith St. Paul) *Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living: He died for all, that they, which henceforth live, should not live to themselves, but unto him which died for them:*[q] and, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*[r]

4. He likewise acquired a lordship over us by desert, and as a reward from God, suitable to his performances of obedience and patience, highly satisfactory

[f] Rom. xiv. 17; Eph. i. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 9.
[g] John xvii. 2; xiii. 3; Eph. i. 22.
[h] John x. 27. [i] John xvii. 12, 6; vi. 39.
[j] Col. ii. 15.
[k] Rom v. 8, 10; Col. i. 21; Eph. i. 8; Tit. iii. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 12. [l] Luke i. 74.

[k] Οὐ γὰρ οὐρανὸν, καὶ γῆν, καὶ θάλασσαν δοὺς, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντων τούτων τιμιώτερον, τὸ ἑαυτοῦ αἷμα καταθεὶς, οὕτως ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασε.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 21.
[m] Rom. xi. 32; iii. 23; Gal. iii. 22.
[n] 1 Tim. ii. 6. [o] Rom. viii. 34.
[p] Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. i. 18; 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23.
[q] Rom. xiv. 9; 2 Cor. v. 15.
[r] Tit. ii. 14.

and acceptable to God: *For this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name: For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross; and having despised the shame, sat down at the right hand of the glory of God: We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he hath lifted up his head: Because he poured out his soul unto death; therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong*, as the prophet expresseth it.[s]

5. We may add, that he hath acquired a good right and title to dominion over us, as our continual most munificent benefactor; by the great benefits he bestoweth on us, by the ample hire and large recompense he pays us. He affords us a sure protection under him, and a liberal maintenance; high privileges, and ample rewards for our service: it is no Egyptian bondage that he would detain us in, requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompense; but it is a most beneficial and fruitful service. Christ hath promised *to withhold no good thing* from his servants;[t] nothing requisite for the support or convenience even of this temporal life (for to them *who seek the kingdom of God, and its righteousness, even all these things shall be added*, or cast in;) but especially most inestimable precious recompenses he hath promised, and will certainly bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings;[u] *He will render to every man according to his works; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life*,[v] saith St. Paul: and, *Being freed from sin* (saith he again) *and made servants to God, ye have your fruit unto santification, and in the end everlasting life*;[w] a fruit to sanctification, that is, all benefits conducing to our spiritual welfare here, and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happiness. To them who have been diligent in performing their tasks, and improving their talents committed to them now for his interest and honour, he will one day say, *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy*: and, *Blessed* (saith our good Master) *are ye, when men shall revile you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great, shall your reward be in heaven.*[x] Now he that is at such care and charges for us, who feeds and furnishes us so plentifully, who rewards our small pains, our poor works, our unprofitable services (such indeed we must confess all that we can do to be), with so high and bountiful wages, him surely most justly we should esteem, and most willingly call our good Lord and master.

6. Yea further yet, our Saviour Jesus is not only our Lord by nature, and by acquisition in so many ways (by various performances, deserts, and obligations put on us), but he is also so by our own deeds, by most free and voluntary, most formal and solemn, and therefore most obligatory, acts of ours. He is our Lord and King by election;* we finding ourselves oppressed by cruel tyrants and enemies, groaning under intolerable slaveries, loaded with heavy burdens, plunged into grievous distresses, tormented with anxious fears, regrets, and sorrows, had our recourse unto him, upon his gracious invitation, offering us deliverance, ease, and refreshment, under his most equal and gentle government: *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest—Take my yoke upon you;—for my yoke is easy, and my burden light*:[y] so he was pleased to invite us; and so we did, or have at last seemed and pretended to undergo his yoke, freely submitting to his government: we have vowed perpetual allegiance and fealty to him, as to our lawful Prince; we have promised entire subjection to his will, and sincere obedience to his laws; we have engaged, forsaking all things, to follow

[s] John x. 17; Phil. ii. 8; Heb. xii. 2; ii. 9; Psal. cx. 7; Isa. liii. 12.

[t] Psal. lxxxiv. 11; xxxiv. 9, 10.

[u] Matt. vi. 33; Rom. viii. 28; 2 Pet. i 4.

[v] Rom. ii. 6.

[w] Rom. vi. 22.

* Καθάπερ ἡμεῖς οἰκετὰς ἀγοράζοντες, αὐτοὺς τοὺς πωλουμένους πρότερον ἐρωτῶμεν εἰ βούλονται ἡμῖν δουλεῦσαι· οὕτω καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ποιεῖ· ἐπειδὴν, &c.—οὐ γὰρ κατηναγκασμένη ἡ δεσποτεία αὐτοῦ ἐστι, &c.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 21.

[x] Matt. xxv. 21; Rev. xi. 18; Matt. v. 11, 12.

[y] Matt. xi. 28.

him, to follow him as our Captain, and to fight resolutely under his banners, against the common enemies of his glory and our salvation.[z] We did, *συμφωνεῖν* (as it is in the parable), *contract*[a] and agree with him upon certain conditions and considerations, most advantageous to ourselves, to be his faithful servants, and diligently to perform his work: we renounced all other masters; yea resigned up all claim to any liberty or power over ourselves; becoming absolutely devoted to his will and command: this we did at our baptism,[b] in most express and solemn manner, and in every religious performance we confirm our obligation; when we acknowledge his right over us, and our duty toward him; when we implore his protection, his succour, and his mercy; when we promise our humble respect and obedience to him: if our daily confessions do signify any thing; if our vows and protestations have any truth or heart in them; if our prayers are serious, our praises are hearty, our communions have in them any thing of good earnest and sincerity; we do by them continually tie faster the band of this relation and duty toward him; he by our renewed choices, and consents, and promises, and acknowledgments, doth appear to be our Lord. But let thus much suffice for explication of this point; or for considering upon what grounds Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is our Lord: now for practical application of the point thereof.

1. The general influence which this doctrine may and should have upon our practice is very obvious and palpable. If we are truly persuaded that Christ is our Lord and Master, we must then see ourselves obliged humbly to submit unto and carefully to observe his will; to attend unto, and to obey his law, with all readiness and diligence; for, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?*[c] is the expostulation of our Lord himself, implying it to be a vain and absurd profession, an irrational and illusive pretence we make, when we avow and invoke him as our Lord, but withal disclaim his authority in our practice, by slothfully neglecting or wilfully disobeying his commands: *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven;*[d] that is, not he that makes loud and eager professions (crying Lord, over and over again) is in God's esteem a loyal subject, or faithful servant, or shall obtain the rewards assigned to such; but he that, although perhaps more sparing in words and pretences, doeth really his duty, and performs the will of God. *Many* (saith our Saviour again) *shall in that day* (in that great day of final account and recompense) *say unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name prophesied, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity.*[e] Not only bare professions and acknowledgments are insufficient, but even the fairest and most plausible actions done in the name of Christ will avail nothing, without real obedience to the law of Christ; even then, when such actions are performed, Christ doth not know them; that is, doth not esteem them his servants; the working of iniquity rendering them uncapable of that name and privilege. Such persons do, as St. Paul speaks, *profess to know him* (or acknowledge him as their Lord), *but with their whrks they deny him; who are disobedient, and to every good work reprobate,* (that is, upon trial found bad and false;[f]) *they* (as St. Peter says) *deny the Lord that bought them.*[g] *Do ye not know* (saith St. Paul) *that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey?*[h] and, *Every one* (saith our Saviour) *that doeth sin is the servant of sin:* and, *By whom* (saith St. Peter) *a man is overcome, to him he is made a servant, or enslaved,** (*διδούλωται.*) It is not what we say, but what we do; not what we would seem, but what we indeed are, doth really constitute, and truly denominate us servants: we not only shall lose the rewards and priv-

[z] 2 Tim. ii. 3; iv. 8.
[a] Matt. xx. 2. [b] Chrys. Ἀνέρ. 21.
[c] Luke vi. 46.

* John viii. 34; 2 Pet. ii. 19.—Πάντιμος καὶ ἔνδοξος, καὶ ζωοποιὸς προσηγορία.—Mar. Lugd. Euseb. v. 2.
[d] Matt. vii. 21.
[e] Matt. vii. 22; Luke xiii. 25.
[f] Tit. i. 16. [g] 2 Pet. i. 16.
[h] Rom. vi. 16.

ileges granted to the servants of Christ, but we do even forfeit all claim to the very name, if we disobey his commands, being indeed properly servants to those lusts which sway us; to that devil, whose pleasure we fulfil; to that world, whose bad manners we follow: we do but invade and usurp the name of Christians, if our practice is not conformed to the precepts of our Lord.*

2. Indeed the consideration of this point doth clearly demonstrate to us the great heinousness of sin; how many follies, iniquities, basenesses, and ingratitudes, lie complicated therein: the madness of opposing irresistible power, and dissenting from infallible wisdom: the unworthiness of offending and abusing immense goodness; the injustice and disloyalty which are couched in the disobedience of him, who by so many titles, and upon so many obligations, is our Lord: the abusiveness of evacuating all his laborious and expensive designs in acquiring us; the levity and giddiness of disavowing him by our practice, whom we so often have acknowledged our Lord, and vowed entire subjection unto.

3. Again, if Christ be our Lord, then are we not our own lords, or our own men; we are not at liberty, or at our own disposal, as to our persons or our actions; those rules of the civil law, *that a servant can possess nothing of his own, that no profit can simply accrue to him*,† but all in result must go to his lord: that he is reckoned nobody in law, and the like, do most perfectly agree to us in regard to Christ, who is upon so many accounts absolutely our Lord, infinitely more than one man can be to another. We consequently must not think to have our own wills, we must not attend our own business, we must not please our own appetites, or gratify our own desires, or enjoy our own pleasures, or follow our own fancies, or regard our own profits, or seek our own honour;* we must not undertake or prosecute any thing merely our own, or further than doing so is subordinate unto or consistent with the service, interest, and glory of our Lord: otherwise we do constitute ourselves the lords and masters, in effect renouncing and casting off him: if he be truly our Lord, it is his will and word that should be the rule of all our actions; which we should diligently attend unto, which we should readily observe: it is his business, that we should with especial care mind, and most earnestly prosecute; it is his advantage and credit, that we should propound unto ourselves, as the main aims of all our endeavours. Whatever we design or undertake of moment, we should do it with this formal consideration and reference; doing it as the servants of Christ, from conscience of our duty to him, with intention therein to serve him, with expectation of reward only from him; according to those apostolical precepts: *Whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of our Lord:* we must *glorify him with our bodies and our spirits, which are his:* we must *not live to ourselves, but to him that died, and rose again for us:* since *whether we live or die* (that is, whatever action we set upon, relating either to life or death), *we are the Lord's;*[1] we should direct all to his honour, profit, and service.

4. If Christ be our Lord (absolutely and entirely such), then can we have no other lords whatever, in opposition to him, or in competition with him; or otherwise any way than in subordination and subserviency to him; *No man* (as he doth himself tell us) *can serve two lords;*[2] that is, two lords having collateral or equal authority; their injunctions will interfere, oppose, or supplant one the other; our affections will incline to one more than to the other; at least we shall be detained in hovering suspense; our leisure, our care, our endeavour being employed in the service or attendance of one, will force us to neglect and disappoint the other: *Ye cannot serve God and Mam-*

* Mendacium est Christianum se dicere, et opera Christi non facere.—*Ambr.* It is a lie, to call one's self a Christian, and not to do the works of Christ, as St. Ambrose saith. Omnino nihil prodest nomen sanctum habere sine moribus; quia vita a professione discordans abrogat illustris tituli honorem per indignorum actuum vilitatem.—*Salv. de Gub. Dei*, iii. *sub. fin.*

† Ὁ δοῦλος οὐ μόνον δεσπότου δοῦλός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὅλος ἐκείνου.—Arist. Pol. i. 3.

* Τοῦ δούλου ἐστι τὸ ζῆν μὴ ὡς βούλεται.—Ar. Pol. vi. 2.

[1] 1 Cor. x. 31; vi. 20; 2 Cor. v. 15.

[2] Matt. vi. 24.

mon; serving wealth (that is, eagerly affecting it, and earnestly pursuing it) is inconsistent with our duty to Christ; the like may be said of honour, of pleasure, of curiosity, of any worldly thing; for, *He that will be a friend of the world is thereby* (saith St. James) *constituted*[k] *an enemy of God;* and if he thereby be made an enemy, he surely can be no good servant; a servant being (as the philosopher calls him) *humilis amicus, a meaner sort of friend;* who performeth service out of good-will and affection; like St. Paul, who discharged that high and laborious service, of preaching the gospel, incumbent on him, out of that kindly necessity which he expresseth, saying, *The love of Christ constrains me;*[l] or as St. Peter enjoins those particular servants of Christ (employed by him in teaching and guiding his people) to do their duty, μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς, ἀλλ' ἑκουσίως, *not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;* or as St. Paul chargeth all servants, μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύειν, *to serve with good-will, as to the Lord, and not to men.*[m] It is indeed the proper nature and the necessary condition of this service, that we decline, forsake, renounce, detest, all other obligations, all affections, all encumbrances, which may avert us from a close adherence thereto. *Whoever* (saith he) *he be of you, that forsaketh not* (or who renounceth not, who biddeth not farewell to, ὃς οὐκ ἀποτάσσεται) *all that he hath, cannot be my disciple,*[n] or my follower and servant: *If any man cometh after me, and do not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea and his own life, he cannot be my disciple;*[o] he cannot indeed truly and heartily be so, who in love and observance of Christ will not readily forsake and lose all.

5. Particularly, therefore, if Christ be our Lord, we are thereby disobliged, yea we are indeed prohibited, from pleasing or humouring men, so as to obey any command, to comply with any desire, or to follow any custom of theirs, which is repugnant to the will or precept of Christ: *If* (saith St. Paul) *I did yet please men* (that is, humour, soothe, or flatter them, so the word ἀρέσκειν doth import), *I were not the servant of Christ;*[p] that is, I were not such in effect, I did in so doing not behave myself as a servant of Christ; as it becomes such an one, and as such an one is obliged to do. And, *Ye* (saith he again) *are bought with a price, be not the servants of men* (or, *ye are not the servants of man,*[q] so the words will bear rendering;) that is, ye therefore do not, or ye therefore ought not, to perform service to men, absolutely as such, or with ultimate relation unto them; but when ye lawfully and allowably do it, ye do it out of conscience, and regard to Christ, as his servants. We may indeed, yea in duty we must, obey men humbly and willingly, diligently and faithfully, in our stations, and according to our conditions, as we are placed and called in this world, either as subjects or servants; but we must do this in subordination to our principal and supreme Lord; in obedience to his command, and with regard to his service; so we are taught by St. Paul: *Servants* (saith he) *obey your masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling* (that is, very respectfully and carefully), *in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ; doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good-will, as to the Lord, and not unto men:*[r] and, *Be subject* (saith St. Peter) *to every human constitution,* διὰ τὸν Κύριον, *for the Lord* (that is, out of conscientious regard or affection to the Lord; because he is our Lord;) *as free, and not having your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God:*[s] yea, *whatsoever* (saith that wise instructor St. Paul, again) *ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompense of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.*[t]

6. It is, we see (which may be another improvement of this consideration), not only an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty; particularly to the performance of those hard duties (so contrary to natural will and stomach), cheerful obedience and submission to men; who often, as St.

[k] James iv. 4, καθίσταται.
[l] 2 Cor. v. 14; ix. 17.
[m] 1 Pet. v. 2; Eph. vi. 7.
[n] Luke xiv. 33.
[o] Luke xiv. 26.
[p] Gal. i. 10.
[q] 1 Cor. vii. 23.
[r] Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7.
[s] 1 Pet. ii. 13, 16.
[t] Col. iii. 23, 24.

Peter intimates,[u] are σκολιοί, *crooked*, or untoward and harsh in their dealings with their servants; to whom yet upon this consideration he enjoins us willingly to yield obeisance, no less than to *the good and gentle;* for that in this and all other performances of duty we do serve a most equal and kind Master, who will graciously accept our service, and abundantly requite it; a Lord, that will not suffer his servants to want any needful sustenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection or assistance; who will not only faithfully pay them their promised allowance, but will advance them to the highest preferment imaginable. No man ever had reason to complain with them in the prophet, *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances?*[v] No; the devil himself, with envy and regret observing the benefits and blessings which the pious man enjoyed in regard to his faithful service, could not but say, *Doth Job serve God for nought? hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.*[w] No wonder, argued the detracting spirit, and little thank or praise is due to a servant, whose service is so bountifully rewarded. Indeed our Lord is not only just and faithful, so as to render unto every man ἴδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον, *a proper reward answerable to his proper pains;*[x] but he is exceedingly, beyond expression, liberal in bestowing on his servants retributions infinitely surpassing the desert and worth of all their labours: for their small, weak, faint, imperfect, and transitory endeavours (by all which he is indeed really nothing the richer, or the greater), he returneth blessings in nature, in degree, in duration, immensely great, precious, and glorious. He fails not here to feed them with food convenient, to clothe them decently, to supply all their needs, to comfort them in all distresses, to keep them in all safety, to deliver them from all evil; he afterwards conferreth on them a kingdom, an incorruptible and unfading crown; a state of perfect joy and endless glory.

7. It is a great comfort also for a Christian (how mean and low soever in his worldly condition) to consider the dignity and excellency of this his relation; how great and how good a Lord he serveth; that the greatest princes are his fellow-subjects; for, *He is the King of kings and Lord of lords: All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him.*[y] Yea, that the highest angels are his fellow-servants (as the angel in the Revelation told St. John.[z]) That although his Lord be so high in power and glory above all, yet he is so gracious as not to neglect or despise him; but condescendeth to regard the lowest of his servants with equal care and favour as the highest:[a] *He accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they all are the work of his hands*, said good Elihu;[b] and they all, we might add, are the price of his blood.

8. And as it is a comfort to the meanest, so it is no shame or disparagement for the greatest of men to serve such a Lord; it is a relation in itself more worthy and honourable than the highest dignity or preferment in the world: to wear a crown, how rich soever; to command the whole earth; to possess all the land, and all the gold under heaven, are beggarly, trivial, and sordid things, in comparison thereto: a servant of Christ (the apostolical style) is a style far more glorious than all those windy titles which the greatest monarchs assume to themselves; having such a place in God's peculiar regard and care doth exceed all privileges and advantages, all glories and dignities, which any person is capable of: well therefore did St. Paul, in respect to *the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord*,[c] esteem all such things (all worldly privileges and benefits) *as loss and as dung*, as things detrimental and despicable; wisely did the holy apostles forsake all things (all their dearest relations, all their sweetest enjoyments, all their secular occupations) to

[u] 1 Pet. ii. 28.
[v] Mal. iii. 14.
[w] Job i. 9, 10.
[x] 1 Cor. iii. 8.
[y] Rev. xix. 16; Psal. lxxii. 11.
[z] Rev. xxii. 8.
[a] Eph. i 20; Luke i. 48.
[b] Job xxxiv 19.
[c] Phil. iii. 8.

follow such a Lord. (*Behold*, saith St. Peter, *we have let go all things, and have followed thee.*[d]) Most just and reasonable are those sentences pronounced against those vainly proud, or perversely contumacious people, who are ashamed to obey him, or do reject his government: *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me or of my words, him shall the Son of man be ashamed of, when he comes in the glory of himself, and of his Father, and the holy angels.*[e] Them who proudly disdain to serve him here, will he with just and sad disdain reject hereafter from his face and favour; yea, with dreadful vengeance will he punish their perverseness: *Those mine enemies* (will he say) *that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*[f]

9. St. Paul also maketh use of this consideration, to press upon superiors their duties toward their inferiors; their duties of equity, meekness, kindness, mercy, pity, and all humanity: *Masters* (saith he) *yield unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven:* and, *Ye masters* (saith he again) *do the same things to them* (perform the like good offices, show the same good-will to your servants), *forbearing menaces: knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.*[g] Thus in Leviticus God commandeth his people not *to rule over their servants with rigour*, assigning this reason, *For they are my servants*,[h] &c. And we know how our Saviour, as he doth commend and bless those wise and honest servants, who, being appointed over his household (that is, being placed in any superior rank or charge), do behave themselves justly and kindly to their fellow servants, *dispensing to them their food in due season*;[i] so upon those who injuriously or rudely do beat or abuse their fellow servants; who are harsh, rigorous, or unmerciful in exactions of debt, or in any other dealings toward them, he denounceth severe chastisement: *A servant of the Lord* (that is, one employed by Christ in any office or charge, *must not fight, but must be gentle unto all*,[j] saith St. Paul; such indeed should be the humility and goodness of Christians one toward another, that the greatest of them should stoop to the meanest offices and expressions of good-will to their brethren: *He* (saith our Lord) *that will be great among you, let him be your minister; and he that will be first of you, let him be your servant.*[k]

10. The consideration, indeed, of Christ being our Lord, is in general an inducement to charity, to all sorts of charity: *We must* (saith St. Paul) *walk worthy of our calling, with all lowliness of mind and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace;* because *we are members of* the same *body, whereof Christ is the head*, and fellow-servants of the *same Lord.*[l] It is an endearing and obliging relation; it becometh us and concerneth us, being so of one family, to be courteous and gentle, kind and helpful one to another; to maintain peace, quiet, and love one with another;[m] it is a just duty and respect to our common Master, who loveth order and peace, who hateth confusion and dissension in his house; who is himself full of charity toward every one of his, and therefore hath enjoined it as the especial duty, hath declared it to be the most distinctive character of his servants and followers: *Hereby* (saith he) *shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

11. Particularly this consideration doth oblige us to exercise that piece of charity and of justice which consists in forbearing rash and harsh censure; which practice is not only very uncharitable and unjust toward our brethren, but it is also a wrongful and arrogant encroachment upon our Lord himself, unto whom only the right of decision in such cases doth appertain; unto whose infallible and impartial judgment both they and we are obnoxious: *Who art thou* (saith St. Paul) *that judgest another's servant?* (or domestic; ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην: *to his own master he standeth or falleth:* and, *Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?* and, *We shall all be presented before the judgment-*

[d] Luke xviii. 28.
[e] Luke ix. 26.
[f] Luke xix. 27.
[g] Col. iv. 1; Eph. vi. 9.
[h] Lev. xxv. 42, 43, 55.
[i] Matt. xxiv. 45, 49; xviii. 28, &c.
[j] 2 Tim. ii. 24.
[k] Mark x. 43, 44.
[l] Eph. iv. 2, 5.
[m] 2 Cor. xiii. 11.
[n] John xiii. 15.

seat of Christ:[o] *There is* (saith St. James) *one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?*[p] It is, we see, an invading our Lord's right and authority, without most evident and reasonable cause, to censure or condemn our fellow-servants.

12. The consideration of this point our Saviour doth also improve, as an engagement to imitate himself in the practice of all virtue and piety; especially in the practice of charity, humility, and patience. It is proper for a servant to follow and attend upon his master in all places and in all performances; to compose himself in behaviour to the manners and example, to conform himself to the garb and condition of his Lord: is it not absurd and unseemly that the servant should be more stately, or more delicate than his master; that he should slight those whom his master vouchsafes to respect; that he should refuse to undertake those employments, should scorn to undergo those hardships, which his master doth willingly condescend unto? To such purpose our Saviour discourseth; impressing by this argument on his disciples the duties of humility, charity, and patience, by him exemplified for that very end: *Ye call me* (saith he) *Master, and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am: if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*[q] And having directed his disciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts, and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by subjoining, *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord: it is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his lord;*[r] that is, the servant in all reason ought to be very well content if he find such usage as his lord hath willingly and patiently undergone. And he thus again impresses these duties on them: *He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve: for whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? but I am among you as he that serveth.*[s] Yea, St. John raiseth this consideration so high, that he saith thus: *Because he laid down his life for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*[t]

13. Finally, for our satisfaction and encouragement, we may consider, that the service of Christ is rather indeed a great freedom than a service; it is a reducement into a most desirable estate, wherein we fully enjoy that wherein liberty is defined to consist, ἐξουσίαν αὐτοπραγίας, *power of doing whatever* (as reasonable and wise men) *we please* ourselves to do; wherein all things are lawful to us, excepting only such things as are unprofitable to us, or hurtful. What Aristotle made the character of a just prince, (whose government doth nowise prejudice true liberty), that he doth not in his government chiefly aim at his own profit, but his subjects' good, is perfectly true of our Lord:* he is indeed capable to receive no private benefit to himself, beside satisfaction in our welfare; all his laws and commands, all his administrations and proceedings, are purely directed to our advantage. Even the statutes which God gave to Israel by Moses are said to have been *commanded for their good,*[u] not for any good that could accrue to God from their observance: much more are the laws of Christ purely such; conducing to the health, the safety, the peace, the comfort, the joy, the happiness, both of our bodies and souls; of the present temporal life here, and of our immortal state hereafter: *His religion is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*[v] Well, therefore, might St. James call the law of Christ *a perfect law of liberty;* well might our Saviour say, *If the Son set you free, then are ye free indeed.*[w] What the Stoics vaunted of themselves, the Christian modestly and truly may say, that he is the only free man; it is this philosophy only, to which those words of Seneca may truly be applied; *You must serve philosophy, that you may attain true*

[o] Rom. xiv. 4, 10. [p] James iv. 12.
[q] John xiii. 13, 14, 15.
[r] Matt. x. 24; Luke vi. 40; John xv. 20.

* Quæ est vera libertas? innocentia.—*Epict.*
[s] Luke xxii. 26; Matt. xx. 25.
[t] ὅτι, 1 John iii. 16.
[u] Deut. x. 13; vi. 24; Neh. ix. 13.
[v] 1 Tim. iv. 8.
[w] James i. 25; John viii. 36.

*liberty:** for, if to be above the reach of all considerable evil or mischief; if to be safe from all enemies, and secure from all impressions of fortune; if to have no reason much to fear, or much to grieve for any thing; if not to desire things base, or things immoderate; if to have an especial command over one's self, is (as those philosophers define it) properly liberty; then is he most free that serves our Lord. If to be rescued from the servitude of disorderly passions and base vices is the greatest freedom, then the good Christian chiefly doth enjoy it. *A good man* (saith St. Austin) *although he serve, is free; a bad man, although he reign, is a slave; not of one man, but, which is more grievous, of so many lords, as of vices.*† Such indeed is the benignity of our Lord, that he treats his faithful servants rather as friends than as servants: *Ye are* (saith he) *my friends, if ye do whatever I command you; I call you no more servants.*[x] Yea, he bears to them the affection of a brother, and affords them the honour to be so styled: *Go* (saith he, after his resurrection, to Mary Magdalene) *to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; to my God, and to your God:* and, [y]*Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην, See ye what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God.*[y]

Full of so many practical uses is this excellent point; the which I leave to be further deduced by your meditation.

Now, *The God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;*[z] to whom be glory and praise for ever. *Amen.*

* Philosophiæ servias oportet, ut tibi contingat vera libertas.—*Sen. Ep.* 8, et 88.

Non homines timere, non fortunam; nec turpia velle, nec immodica; in se ipsum habere maximam potestatem, &c.—*Sen. Ep.* 75.

† Bonus etiamsi serviat, liber est; malus etiamsi regnet, servus est; nec unius hominis, sed quod gravius est tot dominorum, quot vitiorum.—*Aug. de Civ. Dei*, iv. 112.

[x] John xv. 14.

[y] John xx. 17; i. 12; 1 John iii. 1.

[z] 1 Thess. v. 23.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

SERMON XXIII.

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.—*For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.**

WITHOUT any preface, or circumstance of speech, we observe three particulars couched in these words:—1. The incarnation of Jesus our Lord, implied by the word τὸ γεννηθὲν, *that which is conceived*, or generated. 2. The principal efficient cause of this incarnation, the Holy Ghost; by whose immediate operation, without any active influence of man, he was generated; *is of the Holy Ghost.* 3. The concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject of that divine virtue and operation; he was *conceived in her.* Upon each of these particulars, being all of them considerable points of that faith which we daily profess (and especially proper subjects of our meditation at this time), I shall reflect, observing somewhat profitable for our edification both in way of right knowledge, and in tendency to practice.

I. Our Saviour Jesus was conceived and born; that is, the only Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, the same who *was from the beginning*, and did, as St. John in the entrance of his Gospel teacheth us, from all eternity *exist with God*, the eternal *Word of God, by whom all things were made*, was *in the fulness of time* conceived and born:[a] that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, becoming thereby truly and really a man; which wonderful mystery is in scripture by various phrases expressed and implied: by the Word being incarnated, that is, *being made*, or becoming, *flesh: God being manifested in the flesh; The Son of God being sent in the likeness of sinful flesh; partaking of flesh and blood;* his *taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, being found in fashion as a man, assuming the seed of Abraham;* his de-

† Τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου.

[a] John i. 1, &c.; 1 John i. 1.

scending from heaven, coming forth from the Father, being sent and coming into the world; The day-spring from on high visiting us, eternal life being manifested; the result of what is signified by these and the like expressions, that, The blessed and glorious Person, who before from all eternity did subsist *in the form* or nature *of God*, being the Son of God, one in nature with his Father (the express image, or exact character of his substance), did by a temporal generation truly become man, assuming human nature into the unity of his Person; by a real conjunction and union thereof to the divine nature, in a manner incomprehensible and ineffable.[b] He did, I say, truly become man, *like unto us* in all things, as the apostle saith, *sin only excepted*:[c] consisting, as such, of all the essential ingredients of our nature; endued with all our properties, and faculties, subject to all passions, all infirmities, all needs, adherent or incident to our nature and condition here.

He was not only (as the Gnostics and some other heretics have conceited) in shape and outward appearance (as a spectre, deluding men's sight and fancy), but in most real truth, a very perfect man; having a real body, figured and circumscribed as ours, compacted of flesh and blood, visible and tangible; which was nourished and did grow, which needed and received sustenance, which was tender and sensible, frail and passible;* which was bruised with stripes, torn with scourges, pricked with thorns, pierced with nails, transfixed with a spear; which was mortal, and underwent death by expiring its breath, and being disjoined from the soul that enlivened it. He had also a soul, endued with the same faculties as ours; with an understanding, capable of learning and improvement (for he was, as man, ignorant of some things which he might know: and *he grew*, it is said, *in wisdom and in stature*:) with a will, subject and submissive to the divine will; (for, *Let this cup*, said he, *if it be possible, pass from me: but however, let not my will, but thy will be done*: and, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me*:[d]) with several appetites, of meat, of drink, of sleep and rest (for we read that he was hungry, that he thirsted, that he was weary:) yea with various passions and affections (φυσικὰ καὶ ἀδιάβλητα πάθη, I mean, that is, natural and irreprehensible passions;) and these of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, such as zeal, pity, sorrow;[e] the which were sometime declared by very pathetical significations, and are expressed in high terms; as upon occasion of his friend Lazarus's death it is said, *He groaned in spirit and was troubled*;[f] he then, and upon other occasions, out of pity and sorrow, did *weep*; and ye know what excesses of sorrow, what anxieties and agonies, what tribulations, disturbances, and amazements, the evangelists, using those very terms, describe him to have undergone at his passion; so that, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, *We have not an high priest that could not compassionate* (or sympathise with) *our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted* (or exercised and proved) *as we are, yet without sin.*[g]

So it appeareth that the Son of God (co-eternal and co-essential with his Father) became the Son of man; truly and entirely partaking of the nature and substance of man, deficient in no essential part, devoid of no property belonging to us; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience consequent upon our nature, except only sin; the which is not a natural so much as a moral evil; did not arise from man's original nature, but proceedeth from his abused will; doth rather corrupt than constitute a man.

Now concerning this great dispensation several inquiries and considerations may be made, concerning the manner of

* *Vide* Athan. in tract. contr. Apollinar. Phil. ii. 8,— Ἐν σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος.— Rom. viii. 3.

[b] John i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Rom. viii. 3; Heb. ii. 14, 16; Phil. ii. 7, 8; John iii. 13, 31; vi. 33, 38, 50, 51, 58; iii. 17; x. 36; xvii. 18; 1 John iv. 2, 3, 9; Gal. iv.; John xvi. 27, 28; Luke i. 78; 1 John i. 2; Phil. ii. 7, 8; John x. 30; xiv. 9; 1 John v. 7; Col. i. 15; 2 Cor. iv. 4.

[c] Heb. i. 3; ii. 17; iv. 15.

[d] Mark xiii. 32; Luke ii. 52; Matt. xxvi. 39; Luke xxii. 42; John v. 30; Matt. xxi. 18; John iv. 6, 7.

[e] Matt. xvi. 23; John ii. 17; Mark iii. 5.

[f] John xi. 33.

[g] Περίλυπος, Matt. xxvi. 38; Ἀδημονεῖν, Matt. xxvi. 37; Ἀγωνία, Luke xxii. 44; Τετάρακται, John xii. 27; Ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, Mark xiv. 33; Πειρασμοῖς, Luke xxii. 28; Heb. iv. 15.

it, how therein God did assume our nature; or how therein God and man subsist united; concerning the reason of it, whence it proceeded, and why it was designed; concerning the use and influence of it, which it should have upon our practice.

1. As for the first point, the manner of this mystery, we may well, in discretion and modesty, answer with the schoolman, *It is not in man to define what manner of communication this is, whereby the human nature is communicated to the Word;** we cannot indeed otherwise than by negation determine, not otherwise than by comparison explain it. No words, perhaps, which we do use to signify our conception about these material and inferior things, will perfectly and adequately suit to a mystery so much remote from the common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity. To affirm positively, that this wonderful incarnation did come to pass, that this incomprehensible and ineffable union doth persist in this or that manner, may be rash and dangerous; it would cease to be admirable, if we could fully conceive or express it: but this justly and safely we may assert, that whatever manner of conception or expression about it doth plainly derogate from the divine perfections, or is irreconcilably repugnant to the nature of things, or disagreeth with the tenor of revealed truths evidently connected unto or depending on this mystery; or which (either directly and immediately, or obliquely and by manifest consequence) doth contradict the language and doctrine of the holy scriptures, is to be rejected by us: whence we may for exclusion of errors and mistakes about this point, with the holy Fathers, and particularly with the great council of Chalcedon, assert, that in the incarnation of our Lord the two natures, divine and human, were united ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως.[h]

(1.) The natures were, I say, united ἀσυγχύτως, that is, without any confusion on commixtion; for such a way of blending would induce a third nature different from both, such as resulteth from the composition and contemperation of the elements into a mixed body: such a commixtion being supposed, our Lord would be neither God nor man, but another third kind of substance, such as must not without any ground or authority be supposed; that would destroy, diminish, or alter the properties of each; which is unsound to say, and impossible to be; for the divine nature is not capaple of any diminution or alteration: wherefore both natures in this mystery do subsist entire, distinct and unconfused, each retaining its essential and natural properties.

(2.) The incarnation was performed ἀτρέπτως, that is, without conversion or transmutation of one nature into another: the divinity could not be turned into humanity; for how could God (the eternal self-subsistent, most simple, and immutable Jehovah), as such, be anywise changed or made, become infirm and passible, consist of body and soul, suffer and die? Nor could the humanity be turned into divinity; for how could that which did not subsist at all before the incarnation, be therein converted into another thing? why should our Saviour ever be called man, when his humanity was by translation into divinity destroyed? why is it said, *the Word was made flesh*, if the flesh was changed into the Word?— to omit how impossible it is that one substance should be transmuted into another, especially a corporeal into a spiritual, a finite into an infinite; to omit likewise the many dangerous consequences of this position, and its inconsistency with many principal and plain doctrines of our religion, particularly the real passion and death of our Lord, which could not be incident to him otherwise than as retaining the true nature of man.

(3.) The natures were also joined ἀδιαιρέτως, undividedly; that is, so as they have not distinct subsistences, or do not constitute two persons: for there is but one Christ, one Person, to whom being God and being man are truly and properly attributed.

(4.) We must also understand the natures to be united ἀχωρίστως, inseparably; so that they never are severed, the union is never dissolved; the same person never ceasing to be both God and man; not even then, when our Lord, as man, did undergo death; for he raised himself

* Cujusmodi sit hæc communicatio, qua natura humana communicatur Verbo, non est hominis definire.—*Alens.*

[h] Syn. Chalc. Act. v. (fin.) (pag. 340.)

from the dead, he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen: as being God, he was able to raise himself; as being man, he was capable to be raised by himself; the union between God and man persisting, when the union between human body and soul was dissolved.

We might add, in further exclusion of erroneous conceits, that this mysterious union was not made *κατὰ παράστασιν*, *by assistance*, or close presence only, nor *κατ' ἐνοίκησιν*, merely *by inhabitation*, nor *κατὰ σχέσιν*, *by relation*, nor *κατ' ἀξίαν*, *by estimation*, nor *καθ' ἁρμονίαν*, *by conformity*, in will and practice, nor *κατὰ ταυτοβουλίαν*, *by consent;* as Nestorius and other heterodox dogmatists anciently, in opposition to the catholic exposition of this mystery, did imagine: but it doth not seem worth the while to discuss those antiquated conceits, or with more subtilty to intrigue the point.

As for illustration of it by comparison, I shall only (passing over divers more wide and improper resemblances; such as those of Bellarmine, the union of a man's arm to his body, the incision of a bough into a tree, and the like) observe, that nature doth afford us one similitude very apposite for explication of this mysterious union,* which is the union of a man's soul and body, whereby he becometh one person. The soul and body are two substances, very different in kind, in properties, in dignity: the one of itself material, extended, divisible, passive and corruptible, lifeless and senseless; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion: both of them are also capable of separate existence, or of subsistence by themselves; yet are these two, although in a manner difficult for us to conceive or comprehend, closely united together, and do concur to the making up a man; and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, each retaining its natural properties, without any confusion, or any conversion of one into the other; so also that from them the same man receiveth the denominations of corporeal and spiritual, of mortal and immortal: in a like manner (although in a degree more admirable and incomprehensible) are the divine and human natures conjoined in our Lord; for, as we hear in the Athanasian Creed, *As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.* So much for the manner.

2. As for the reason why the Son of God did assume our nature; the chiefest and clearest reason thereof was, God's design thereby to exercise and demonstrate his immense goodness, mercy, and pity toward us: *So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: In this the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him: Through the tender mercy of our God the day-spring from on high did visit us:* it was *χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία*, the *benignity and philanthropy of God*,[1] which induced him to engage his Son upon such a debasement and examination of himself, that we thereby might be raised to a capacity of salvation.

If we further desire to contemplate the wisdom of God in this admirable proceeding, and to know why God, among other means and methods alike (for all we can know) possible to him, did choose in this way to transact our redemption;* it may be answered, that it becometh us rather to adore the depth of God's wisdom herein, than to sound it, or to hope by searching to reach the bottom of it: yet some congruities of this method to the reason and exigency of things are in the scripture intimated to us, and in some manner are discernible by us, sufficient to recommend the divine wisdom therein to our admiration; reasons may be assigned why our Redeemer should be *θεάνθρωπος*, why God, why man.† It well became God to stoop down thus, that, as his goodness toward us was infinite, so the demonstrations thereof, to his glory and our benefit, should be answerably such, which perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescension: as a prince could not make any other so great attestation of favour to his vassal, as by descending from his throne, laying aside his majesty, putting himself into a like

* Salmeron. apud Gerard. in loc. Exeget. p. 441. Bel.

* God's choice is reason enough.

† Nisi enim esset verus Deus, non adferret remedium; nisi esset homo verus, non præberet exemplum.—*Leo M. de Nat.* Serm. i.

[1] John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9; Rom. v. 8; viii. 32; *Διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ*, Luke i 78; Tit. iii. 4.

condition, conversing freely with him, subjecting himself to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniences with him.*

It was expedient that our Redeemer should be God, that he might be able by his power to save us;† to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our salvation, to subdue those potent enemies which opposed it; to command and conquer nature, to vanquish the powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf.

It was requisite that he should be the co-essential, natural Son of God, that by the nearness of his relation to God, by the supereminent dignity of his person, by the immense value of his merit, he might conciliate God's favour to us, fully appease his wrath incensed against us, and satisfy his justice abused by our offences.

It was convenient that his doctrine should carry with it the highest certainty and strongest efficacy; that his example should challenge the greatest regard and strictest imitation; that his laws should have supreme authority, and with greatest advantage oblige us: fit therefore it was, that he should be God, and have the character of divinity stamped upon what he said and performed.

The redemption and salvation of man did import an honour too august for any creature to be dignified with; it was a work too difficult and mighty for any but God to achieve; it was not proper that any creature should be principal in managing an affair of such height and importance: needful and expedient therefore it was, that our Saviour should be God.

It was also requisite, upon many accounts, that he should be man: that by perfectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will, as man, he might procure God's favour toward man; that as man had deeply wronged and offended God, so man also should highly content and please him; in St. Paul's language, that *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners* (that is, were condemned and exposed to death, upon God's just displeasure for that one man's transgression, backed with the like in his posterity), *so by the obedience of one man many should be made righteous*;‖ (that is, all who would imitate his obedience should be absolved from guilt, exempted from punishment, and received into grace; God being well pleased with and reconciled to mankind, especially to his followers, in regard to that man's dutiful observance of his will.*) Decent it was, that as man did approve, so man also should *condemn sin in the flesh*; that as man by wilful selfpleasing did incur misery, so by voluntary suffering he should recover happiness: Ἔπρεπε, *It did* (as the apostle saith) *become him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.*‖

It was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, to propititate for our faults, to succour and relieve our distresses, should be tender of our good, and sensible of our needs;† that he therefore should by nature and experience be disposed συμπαθεῖν, to *compassionate our infirmities, and* μετριοπαθεῖν, to be *gently affected toward us*, in respect of our ignorances and errors; whence ὤφειλε, he, saith the divine apostle again, according to the design appointed to him, and undertaken by him, ought, or *it did behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God; that he might propitiate for the sins of the people; for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour those that are tempted.*‡

He was to be man also, for that by appearing in human shape, visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us, he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intentions toward us

* Eph. i. 6,—Εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ.

† Ἐνδειξις δικαιοσύνους.

* He by his humanity did unite mankind in fraternity.——Τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καταργήσας.—Eph. ii. 15.——Ὅτι μέγη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων αὐτοῦ.—Eph. v. 30.

† As the Devil did overbear man—Evæ advocata.—*Iren.*—Heb. iv. 15; v. 2.

‡ Heb. ii. 17,—Ἄνθρωπος ψιλὸς σῶσαι οὐκ ἴσχυε· Θεὸς γυμνὸς παθεῖν οὐκ ἠδύνατο.—*Procl. in Conc. Eph.* p. 5.

‖ Rom. v. 19, &c.

‖ Rom. viii. 3, That he might taste death for man.—Heb. ii. 9; Col. i. 22; Heb. ii. 10.

in a more easy, less amazing, and more obliging way, than otherwise could have been: for that hence likewise he could, with more advantage, describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to transcribe; shewing us exemplarily how as men we should behave ourselves; how we should moderate our sensual appetites, how govern our passions, how order and employ all the powers of our soul and members of our body; how pass through all conditions, and entertain all events befalling us; it not being indeed otherwise possible, that so lively and suitable a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, humility, and patience, could have been exhibited to us.

Fit it also was, that he who was to be appointed our judge, substitute of the supreme Judge invisible, should be, as God (of perfect wisdom, and so able to discern all matters of fact, to distinguish all points of right;[l] of perfect rectitude, so as never willingly to discost from truth and equity), so also man; visible and audible to us, without surprising astonishment and terror; apt to screen us from the insupportable presence of God; endued with a natural tenderness of good-will and compassion toward us, disposed to temper needful severity with competent mildness.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was designed to *recapitulate and reconcile* (as St. Paul speaketh) *all things in heaven and earth*, to be the great *mediator* and *peacemaker* between God and man, for the repairing God's honour and dispensing his grace, for the *purchasing our peace* and procuring our salvation, that he should be most nearly allied unto both parties;* that consequently, if possible (and what is to God, the author of this economy, impossible?) he should be both God and man; Son to God, and brother to us; the same in nature with God, in kind with us. Such reason and wisdom is discernible in this dispensation.

III. Now for the practical use of this doctrine (for it is not a doctrine merely speculative, and barren of fruit, or practical use:) it should, first, have a powerful influence upon our minds, causing us, with high degrees of love and gratitude, to adore the infinite goodness of that God who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might advance us from the lowest depth of meanness and wretchedness, to the highest pitch of honour and happiness that we are capable of: what words can express, what thought can apprehend, a favour so unconceivable and ineffable? Well might St. Paul call it ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην, *love transcending all knowledge*:[m] well may heaven admire, and earth be astonished, and hell tremble at the disclosure of such a mystery, at the accomplishing such a miracle of grace and mercy; that the sovereign Majesty of heaven, the eternal Lord of glory, the world's great Maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, should become a poor, small, weak, and frail man; should dwell in a tabernacle of flesh; should converse with silly, wretched, and frail mortals here; should be exposed to want, disgrace, and pain: ὦ βάθος, O depth of goodness and mercy unsearchable! if this will not, what consideration can raise us, what benefit can affect us? what prodigious ingratitude will it be, to be regardless or insensible of kindness so wonderful?

2. Another great use of this point is to engage us, as universally to all obedience, so particularly to the duties of humility, of patience, and of charity. Did the Son of God thus willingly submit, and so abase himself? and shall we then be refractory, shall we exalt ourselves; shall we refuse any appointment, or repine at any preceeding of God? Did he from the highest pitch of glory supercelestial voluntarily descend into this gloomy region and state of ignoble obscurity; did he, abandoning immense wealth, freely embrace extreme poverty; did he gladly sequester himself from those ineffable joys above, to converse with sorrow and sadness here, in this valley of tears, for God's sake, and ours; and shall we be unwilling to do any thing for God's sake, or to part with any thing for him? To these purposes doth St. Paul apply the consideration of this point: *Let* (saith he) *the same mind* (the same humble, patient, meek, charitable mind) *be in you, which*

* Ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, Eph. i. 10; καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξαι, Col. i. 20; 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[l] Acts xvii. 31; x. 42.

[m] Eph. iii. 19.

was in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God—emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death:[n] it was the greatest argument and instance of humility, patience, and charity, that could be, for him, that did exist in the form of God, thus to debase himself, to partake of our nature, and submit to our state: and, *Know* (saith that apostle again) *the grace* (or graciousness) *of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being himself rich, for your sake he became poor* (being rich as God, and Lord of all things, he put himself into this mean and poor condition of man), *that ye, through his poverty, might be rich:*[o] it was a consideration surely most proper to his purpose of inciting unto charity.*

3. The consideration of this point should raise our minds to a sense of the dignity of our nature, accompanied with dispositions of heart and deportments of life answerable thereto: by our Lord's incarnation our nature is so advanced, that we become nearly allied to God, of the blood royal of heaven, in this respect overtopping all the creation of God; so that hereby, as the apostle to the Hebrews discourseth, that of the Psalmist was verified concerning man: *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:*[p] the angels themselves cannot boast of such an honour; for *he took not the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham:*[q] being therefore so highly dignified, we should have a mind suitably great and noble, loving, delighting in, aiming at the most excellent things, void of base cares, of sordid desires, of unworthy designs; we should, in all our conversation, demean ourselves worthily and decently, like the brethren of Jesus and children of God;† that we may not disparage and disgrace this illustrious alliance.[r] As our Lord did vouchsafe, in most condescensive grace, to resemble us, so should we, with a generous and honest ambition, aspire to resemble him; as he stooped to humanity, so let us rear ourselves to a kind of divinity, in purity of mind and sanctity of life; so St. Gregory Nazianzen exhorteth: *Let us* (saith he) *be as Christ, since Christ is become like us: let us, for his sake, be gods, seeing he is become man for us.**

4. The consideration of this point should fill our hearts with spiritual comfort and joy; there never can be a greater occasion or juster cause of rejoicing than this, that our Lord is born and come: it is signally *evangelium, good tidings;* never news more welcome hath come into the world; never report more grateful was heard by mortal ears: it is news from heaven, and the best that ever came thence: *Behold* (said the angel that brought it, and a message it was most worthy the mouth of an angel), *I tell good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people;*† news, at which all heaven was pleased and ravished with joy, breaking presently forth into hymns of praise and congratulation: *There was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace and good-will to men.*[s] In this, if we mark it, all the grand causes of extraordinary joy and festivity do conspire.

Is the birth of a prince ever by honest subjects entertained and celebrated with joy? Behold a Prince born to all the world; a prince that cometh to rule mankind with perfect equity and clemency; to bring with him all peace and prosperity; to achieve the most noble exploits that could be undertaken in our behalf, to protect us in most assured safety, to defend us from all evil, to subdue and destroy all the enemies of our welfare, to rescue us from the greatest slaveries and miseries, to settle us in perfect happiness; he bringeth *salvation from our*

* Ἑορτάζομεν ἐπιδημίαν Θεοῦ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, ἵνα πρὸς Θεὸν ἐκδημήσωμεν, ἢ ἐπανέλθωμεν.—Naz. Orat. 38.

† Agnosce, Christiane, dignitatem tuam, et divinæ consors factus naturæ, noli in veterem vilitatem degeneri conversatione recidere.—*Leo de Nat.* Serm. i.

[n] Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

[o] *Vide* 1 John iv. 10, 11; 2 Cor. viii. 9.

[p] Psal. viii. 5; Heb. ii. 7, 8.

[q] Heb. ii. 16; i. 5.

* Γενώμεθα ὡς Χριστὸς, ἐπεὶ καὶ Χριστὸς ὡς ἡμεῖς. Γενώμεθα θεοὶ δι' αὐτὸν, ἐπειδὰν κἀκεῖνος δι' ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωπος.—Greg. Naz. Orat. 41.

† Luke ii. 10,—Εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην.

[r] Phil. ii. 15; Matt. v. 48; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16; *vide* Leonem, P. de Nat. Serm. vi.

[s] Luke ii. 13.

enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us; so that being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.[t]

Is victory glorious and joyful? See, the invincible warrior is issued forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer;* he that shall quell, disarm, and rifle *the strong one*, that shall rout all the forces of hell, that shall defeat sin, and slay death itself, that shall subdue the world, and subject all things to himself;[u] the *Captain of our salvation* appeareth, triumphing in humility; the great blow is given; the Devil's pride and envy are abased; all the enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his presence; they cannot stand, they break, they scatter, they flee before him.

Is the publishing of peace acceptable? Behold, eternal peace between heaven and earth, as general peace among men, a peace of conscience between man and himself, is now established and proclaimed: the illustrious ambassador, the noble hostage, the infallible pledge thereof, is arrived; *preaching peace to them that are far off, and to them that are near.*[v]

Is recovery of liberty comfortable unto slaves and captives? Behold, the redeemer is come, the great ransom is laid down sufficient to purchase the freedom of whole worlds: innocence, appearing in human nature, hath unlocked the prison of sin, in which we were closely detained; hath broken the shackles of universal guilt, which sorely pinched mankind: he is come, who is anointed to preach (αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν) *dismission to the captives.*[w]

Is the coming of a good friend to be congratulated? Behold, the best friend to all mankind (bringing with him most wholesome advice, most needful succour, most seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, and dwell with us.

Is it a comfortable thing to be graced with honour? What greater honour could mankind be dignified with, than this of receiving the Son of God, into its kind and kindred? What could more advance and adorn us, than this high relation?

Is mirth seasonable to the day of marriage? Behold, heaven and earth this day are coupled, divinity is espoused to humanity, an eternal indissoluble knot of amity, of unity, is tied between God and man; the great Bridegroom is come forth, clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, ready to wed the church, his beloved spouse.*

Is the sun's rising (after a long, dark, and cold night) cheerful and comfortable? See, the *Sun of righteousness is risen, with healing in his wings;* dispensing all about his most pleasant light and salutary influences: *The dayspring from on high hath visited us*, diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, dispelling the night of ignorance and error, *shining out to those that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and guiding our feet in the way of peace: Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee*, &c.[x] Never did heaven with so clear and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as it did this day, when this super illustrious luminary (this *bright morning star*, as he is called in the Apocalypse) did spring up above our horizon.† From this auspicious day commenced the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were exiled from paradise, condemned to death, exposed to hell; the reinstating in a condition of hope, in a capacity of happiness; the return of life and joy into this region of corruption and disconsolateness: this is the day, which *all nations desired*, and earnestly longed for, (with an implicit sense;) which the good patriarchs foreseeing did rejoice; which the prophets in so magnificent strains did predict and presignify. In our Lord's nativity, all mankind was in a manner born, or did revive; was restored from a manifold necessity of dying; from lying dead in the guilt, and under the power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second*

[t] Luke i. 71, 74.
[u] Rev. vi. 2; Luke xi. 22; John xvi. 33.
[v] Eph. ii. 17; Acts x. 36.
[w] Gal. iii. 22; Luke iv. 18.

* In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsæ suæ ecclesiæ Christus adjunctus est, tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est verbum Dei de utero virginali.—*Aug. de Temp.* Serm. ii.

† Rev. xxii. 16,—Ἀστὴρ λαμπρὸς καὶ ὀρθρινός.

[x] Luke i. 78, 79; Isa. lx. 1.

death of endless misery. It is in effect therefore the world's nativity that we celebrate, annexed to that of our Lord; the beginning of the new, better, spiritual, and eternal life to men: all reason, therefore, we have upon this consideration heartily to rejoice; how extremely stupid and senseless are we, if the apprehension of goods so many, so excellent, hence accruing to us, doth not inspire our hearts with a grateful cheerfulness! *This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.*[y]

Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary.

SERMON XXIV.

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.—*For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.**

IF every circumstance of our Lord's wonderful incarnation deserveth to be considered, as affording matter of good instruction, and serving to excite devout affection; then surely the principal causes and ingredients thereof may demand a special regard from us; such are those which are couched in this text; the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, by which it was accomplished; the concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject in whom the divine virtue did work it: upon which two particulars, we shall reflect, in order.

I. It was the *Holy Ghost*, by the singular virtue and operation of whom, without intervention of any man, or earthly father, the blessed Virgin became impregnated and did conceive. Joseph was ὡς ἐνομίζετο, in outward esteem, the father of our Saviour (for, *Is not this*, said they, *the carpenter's son? Is not this the son of Joseph?*) the modesty of his holy mother being preserved from misprision under the shroud of wedlock, during the time that by God's order the mystery and truth of things was to be concealed from general notice, *until the day of his being showed* and *manifested to Israel;*[b] but God only was in truth his Father, his incarnation being performed by the miraculous efficacy of God's holy Spirit; upon which account (beside his eternal generation) he was also the Son of God; for, *Therefore* (said the angel to his mother) *that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*[c]

The matter of fact was well known to Joseph by revelation, and to the blessed Virgin herself by her conscience also; and by them it was attested to the holy apostles; their attestation being seconded by the miracles of our Lord, together with all the potent arguments which confirm his doctrine: nor do we find that even the adversaries of our Lord did ever offer to impeach his parents of imposture, or did anywise trouble them about this report coming from them. And it is so clearly and fully affirmed in the Gospels, that it is prodigiously strange that there have been lately some (called Josephites) who have questioned it, upon weak pretences of discourse;* whom we cannot otherwise consider, than as intolerably audacious perverters of scripture, or subverters of its authority and use; for surely nothing there can be deemed certain, if this point is not. The fact therefore we must take for granted; and, for our further instruction about it, we shall consider three particulars; the *manner* of it, the *reasons* for it, the *practical use* whereto it may be applied.

1. The manner of that operation, whereby the Holy Ghost did effect the human generation of our Lord, is by the archangel Gabriel expressed to be from *the supervention of the Holy Ghost, and the divine power overshadowing the blessed Virgin;*† the which words being of so general interpretation, and as to precise meaning so little intelligible by us, may well serve to bound our curiosity, and to check further inquiry. Some indeed (as the followers of Valentinus and Apollinarius, of old; as Menno, Servetus, and others, of late) have been so bold as to determine, that the Holy Ghost did bring from heaven a body,

* Τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν.

[a] Luke iii. 23; Matt. xiii. 55; John vi. 42; Luke iv. 22; Mark vi. 3.

[y] Psal. cxviii. 24.

* Apud Episcopium—

† Luke i. 35, δύναμις ὑψίστου.

[b] Luke i. 80; John i. 31. [c] Luke i. 35.

which he did convey into the blessed Virgin; or that our Saviour's flesh was formed of a divine seed, from the substance of God himself; or that in his conception the Holy Ghost did create and impart somewhat of matter: but it is enough to say, that these are rash and groundless conceits: the holy Fathers, having weighed and discussed such imaginations, to prevent dangerous or misbecoming thoughts and speeches, about a point of so sacred nature, more soberly do teach, that our Saviour was conceived by the Holy Spirit, not σπερματικῶς, *seminally;* but δημιουργικῶς, *operatively;* οὐ διὰ συνουσίας, *not by a copulation;* but διὰ δυνάμεως, *by power:* not *de substantia Spiritus Sancti, of the substance of the Holy Ghost;*[d] but *de potentia, by the virtue of it;* and further than this, say they, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit? Who can declare his generation,* or exactly describe the manner of a performance so very wonderful and sublime; to the which no experience doth furnish any event like or comparable? When, therefore, it is said that the conception, or generation, was ἐκ Πνεύματος ἁγίου, *of the Holy Ghost*, the preposition ἐκ is to be taken for the same with ὑπὸ, or διὰ (as it is very commonly used), denoting, not matter out of which, but efficiency by which the effect was derived. But,

2. Why was our Saviour conceived by the Holy Ghost? Divers reasons for it may be assigned.

1. It was needful for assuring the divinity of our Saviour, or his being the eternal Son of God. That the Messias, the Redeemer of the world, should be the Son of God, was necessary, according to the purpose of God, the ancient predictions, the general opinions and expectations of God's people (often implied in the Gospels;) accordingly, such he was as the co-eternal Word in his divine nature: but it was requisite that he should also be such according to his human nature; that by his extraordinary generation, as man, his other more sublime generation (so much transcending human conceit) might be more credible, and the world might be convinced of his divinity; for men hardly would have been capable to believe him more than a man, whom they saw born in the common way of men: *Is not this the son of Joseph?* was an argument which they urged against him, when he spake about his *descent from heaven* (John vi. 42,) and caused them to admire, when they observed the power of his miracles (Matt. xiii. 55), and the wisdom of his discourse (Luke iv. 22;) but easily might they be induced to admit a mystery, which was countenanced by so grand a miracle as the birth of a child, by the divine power, without a father.[e]

2. This was the most fit way of accomplishing that so necessary conjunction of the divine and human nature: a work of such grandeur and glory, of such grace and goodness, was not to be achieved by any other agent than by him who is the substantial virtue and love of God; by whom we see all extraordinary and most eminent works to have been managed, to whom commonly the μεγαλεῖα Θεοῦ, the majestic and magnificent things of God, are ascribed: for the creation of the world, it was *the Spirit of God*[f] which moved upon the waters, forming things, and impregnating them with all kinds of life and vigour natural; he it is, to whom those signal works of Providence, the revelation of divine truth, the prediction of future events, the performance of miracles, the renovation of men's minds, and reformation of their manners, in a peculiar manner are attributed; so likewise to him this incomparably supernatural, glorious, and important act was most properly due.

3. It being necessary that our Saviour should be consecrated to his great functions, and perfectly sanctified in his person, as man; and those performances (according to the mystical economy of things among the divine Persons) being appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the natural spring of all derived sanctity; his efficacy must needs intervene to this purpose: if Jeremiah, St. John Baptist, and St. Paul (persons designed for offices and employments in dignity, in consequence, so far inferior), were sanctified, and separated by the Holy Ghost from their

[d] Damasc. iii. 2; Just. Mart. Apol. 2, Aug. de Temp. Serm. vi. P. Leo de Nat. Serm.

[e] Psal. ii. 7, 12; 1 Chron. xxii. 10; 2 Sam. vii. 13; Psal. lxxx. 27; John i. 34, 49; xi. 27; vi. 69; Matt. xvi. 16; Mark xiv. 61; Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34.

[f] Acts ii. 11.

mother's womb;[g] in how much more excellent kind and degree was it requisite that he should be sanctified thereby, who was sent into the world to redeem and purify it from all filth and fault! According to that saying of our Lord, *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?*[h] whereas the style of Gods was given to persons devoted to far meaner services.

4. It was needful that the human nature, which God did vouchsafe so highly to advance, by assuming it to a personal conjunction and union with himself, should be clear from all stain and pollution; such as in ordinary propagation doth adhere to our *sinful flesh* and corrupt nature;* that he whom God even as man would so dearly love, and so entirely be pleased with, should be void of the least inclination to iniquity or impurity; for, as the Psalmist telleth us, *God is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him;* he is *of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot* so much as *look upon iniquity:*[i] how then would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, into so dear a regard, into so full a complacence? He therefore was to be thoroughly sanctified; and thence it was needful that his humanity should issue from the fountain of holiness, God's most holy Spirit.

5. It in like manner was necessary that he who was ordained to appease God's displeasure, and fully to reconcile him toward us, to expiate all our offences, thoroughly to redeem mankind from the guilt and from the power of sin; who with absolute authority was to teach, to exemplify, to command all righteousness, should himself *know no sin: Such an High-Priest* (as the apostle saith) *became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins:*[j] the sacrifice expiatory for our offences was to be *a lamb without blemish and without spot:* whence he was to be fully sanctified;[k] and to become τὸ ἅγιον, *that holy thing* (absolutely), as he was termed by the celestial messenger:[l] whence from the source of sanctity, the Holy Ghost, whose proper name doth import holiness, whose proper work it is to sanctify, he was to derive a perfect sanctity and purity in his sacred conception.

6. We may add, as an observable point, the analogy, or apposite resemblance thereof, between the conception of our Saviour for us, and his *formation in us;*[m] his natural generation, and the spiritual regeneration of Christians; his becoming our brother in the flesh, and our being made his brethren in the Spirit; both being effected by the same agent: as Christ was made true man, and partaker of our nature, so we become true Christians, *and consorts of the divine nature*, by the operation of the same divine Spirit:[n] as he by the dispensation of God, so we by his grace *are born, not by blood, nor by the will of flesh, nor by the will of man, but of God;* hence doth accrue a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was made like to us, but also as we become like to him; and are *begotten of God*, by the same heavenly virtue, the same *incorruptible seed.*[o]

It may indeed be an admonition to us to labour after this spiritual conception, which will render us conformable to our Lord, and far more truly allied to him, than even his partaking our nature hath done; and indeed without that spiritual one, this carnal alliance will not signify any thing of benefit to us; it will little profit us that he was born in the flesh, if we are not *born of the Spirit:* without which generation *we cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*[p]

3. The proper application of this point is to engage us on a thankful adoration of the divine goodness and wisdom; so fully, so fitly carrying on that infinitely gracious work of our redemption; all the divine Persons of the blessed Trinity in a particular manner conspiring, as in the

* Futurum hominum Salvatorem talis ortus decebat, qui et in se haberet humanæ substantiæ naturam, et humanæ carnis inquinamenta nesciret.—*Leo* i. *de Nat.* Serm. 2.

[g] Jer. i. 5; Luke i. 15; Gal. i. 15.

[h] John x. 36.

[i] Rom. viii. 3; Psal. v. 4; Hab. i. 13.

[j] 2 Co. v. 21; Heb. vii. 26, 27.

[k] 1 Pet. i. 19.

[l] Luke i. 35.

[m] Gal. iv. 19.

[n] θείας φύσιως κοινωνοί.—2 Pet. i. 4; Eph. i. 10; John i 13.

[o] 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 John iii. 9.

[p] 2 Cor. v. 16; John iii. 3, 5.

designation, so in the execution thereof; the Father mercifully destinating and sending his Son; the Son willingly and gladly condescending to come; the Holy Ghost effectually bringing him into the world: to which blessed Trinity, therefore, we should render all humble reverence and hearty praise. And so much for the first particular observed in the text.

II. The next is, the concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary to our Lord's generation: *that which is conceived* (or generated) *in her.**

The being generated (τὸ γεννᾶσθαι, here) we may suppose to respect or to express his whole human generation, with the parts and progress thereof; implying on the Virgin's part all that she as a mother did confer thereto; wherein, therefore, are comprehended the following particulars:

1. His conception of her substance, whence he is called *the fruit of her womb;* and *a rod* (that is, a branch, or twig) *sprouting from the stem of Jesse;* and, *Behold* (saith the angel) *thou shalt conceive in thy womb.*[q]

2. The nutrition, accretion, and entire conformation of his body, out of her blood and substance; whence her womb is said to bear him (*Blessed is the womb that bare thee*), to have been *gravidated*, or great with child; the which as it grew, did swell her womb visibly; so that *she was found* (or observed, by apparent signs) *to be with child of him*, or to have him in her womb.[r]

3. His nativity itself, or exclusion into the open world; which is thus expressed by the evangelist: *The days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her firstborn Son.*[s]

Whatever, therefore, any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is to be attributed to the blessed Virgin; whence she was truly and properly *the mother of our Lord*,[t] and is accordingly often so called in the Gospels; whence also she hath been in the church defined to be and commonly styled θεοτόκος, the bearer and mother of God; that is, of him who is God; that term asserting the divinity of Christ and the unity of his person [against Nestorius and his partisans; who said, that the Virgin was not properly θεοτόκος, but χριστοτόκος; and that he who was born, was not God, but ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος, *a man carrying God*, or divinity, in him.[u]]

Now for our instruction and use we may resolve the word *her* into three respects distinctly considerable: he was born of her, a Woman; he was born of her, a Virgin; he was born of her, Mary: each of which respects is pregnant with matter observable: he was born of a Woman, that was highly needful to be; of a Virgin, that was very requisite; of Mary, that doth involve divers circumstances of importance.

1. Our Saviour was born of a woman.

The Valentinian heretics of old did opine that he was only born through a woman, or did merely pass through her, as liquor doth pass through a vessel: but that is a great error; for he was born in her, and of her. In our text it is ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν, *generated in her;* which in sound expresseth no more than her containing him when conceived; but according to the force of the Hebrew particle ב (*be*) answering to ἐν here, is apt to signify more; and must be taken to do so in conformity to parallel expressions: as that of St. Paul, *God sent forth his Son born* ἐκ γυναικὸς, *of a woman;*[v] and that of St. Luke (in the best copies, followed by our English translators) τὸ γεννώμενον ἐκ σου, *The holy thing that is born of thee, or out of thee.*[w]

Indeed of a woman he was born, that is, from the matter and substance of a woman: so as thereby to bear the relation of a kinsman to us, becoming consanguineous to all mankind, which *God did make of one blood;* whence *he is not ashamed to call us brethren* [and alloweth us to be *of his flesh, and of his bones.*][x]

We may easily conceive that God could immediately have created a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and have assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served the design of reconciling

* τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν·

[q] Luke i. 42; Isa. xi. 1,—συλλήψῃ ἐν γαστρί.—Luke i. 31.

[r] Luke xi. 27; ἔγκυος. Luke ii. 5; Matt. i. 18, εὑρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα.

[s] Luke ii. 6, 7.

[t] Luke i. 43.

[u] Nest. ad Cyrill. in Conc. Eph. Cyrill. Epist. ad Nest.

[v] Gal. iv. 4.

[w] Luke i. 35.

[x] Acts xvii. 26; Heb. ii. 11-14; Eph. v. 30

himself to us, and redeeming us: to the effecting that in the most congruous way, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity in blood was needful, or at least was very convenient and suitable; for our blood being tainted, our whole stock having forfeited its dignity and estate by the rebellious disloyalty of our common ancestors, it was expedient that it should be purged and restored by the satisfactory merit and acceptable fidelity of one, who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted and received into God's family, it was proper that business should be transacted by intervention of a common relation; according to the discourse of St. Paul, *God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law*[y] (that according to the obligation undertaken by him, he performing the obedience required by the law, might redeem those who, being tied to obey the law, had yet transgressed it), ἵνα τὴν υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν, *that* (it followeth) *we might receive the adoption;* that is, that we, by virtue and in consequence of that birth from a woman, and of that obedience to the law performed by our brother, might be in capacity to receive the quality or state of sons to God.

It was likewise seemly that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, had overthrown, triumphed over, and captivated God's creature, in just amends for the reparation of God's honour, and our consolation, should by the strength and faithful constancy of one proceeding from a woman, be himself defeated and debased; according to the mystical intent of that most ancient prophecy, or promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head;* of the woman, the man is not mentioned; for,

2. Our Lord was born of a virgin: so it was anciently presignified and predicted, *a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son: a virgin;*[z] *Almah,* ἀπόκρυφος (so Aquila, with respect to the derivation of the word, did render it), that is, *a recluse;* one who perhaps had seldom seen, who *never had known a man.*

This, it seemeth, was that *new thing* (that most strange and admirable thing) which God in the prophet Jeremiah did foreshow, that he *would create in the earth,*[a] and which should then happen, when he would restore Zion, and establish a new covenant with his people: namely, a *woman shall compass a man;* a woman, in a manner extraordinary, without the concourse of a male, should conceive, and enclose in her womb a man; that very man who should accomplish the great matters there predicted and promised. So it was, and so upon divers accounts it was requisite that it should be.

For how otherwise, apparently, to the sense and satisfaction of all men, could he be that which (according to ancient prophecies and common expectation, as also according to the exigency of things, and the tenor of divine purposes) he ought to be, both the Son of God and the Son of Man, otherwise than by coming of a virgin? He must be born of a woman, that he might truly be the son of man; he must be born of a virgin, that he might be clearly the Son of God; how otherwise could there be an effectual conviction of his divine original?

It was also decent and expedient that the tabernacle in which God should reside and dwell should be proper and enclosed;* that the temple of the divinity should be holy and separate; that the soil whence holiness itself would sprout forth should be clear and pure from all sordid mixtures; that none should presume to touch the border of that holy mountain, where God so specially would manifest himself;[b] that the lust of man should not approach that place whence the glory of God would so illustriously shine forth.

It was also most convenient for exciting due attention and regard, for begetting faith, for procuring reverence and admiration in men, that our Redeemer should enter on the world in a manner so peculiar and miraculous; for who that heareth of such an event, can forbear to mind it, and ponder on it? who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by sufficient and certain attestation he learneth

[y] Gal. iv. 4, 5.

[z] Isa. vii. 14.

[a] Jer. xxxi. 22.

[b] Exod. xix. 11.

* Ἔπρεπε γὰρ τὸν ἐρὶ ἀφθαρσίᾳ τοῦ παντὸς ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ βίῳ γενόμενον, ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπηρετούσης αὐτοῦ τῇ γεννήσει τῆς ἀφθαρσίας ἄρξασθαι.—Greg. Nyss. in Christi Nat. (tom. ii. p. 776.)

to have been conceived without any concurrence of man? who will not readily defer high veneration to him, who appeareth in a manner so glorious and supernatural?

3. Moreover, our Saviour was born of Mary; of that singular person determined and described in the Gospels; of her that was espoused to and did live with Joseph; with Joseph the carpenter; who was born in the town of Bethlehem, who lived in the city of Nazareth in Galilee; who both according to natural and legal extraction was descended in a direct lineage from king David, being, as St. Luke saith, *of the house and family of David*,* and who by consequence did lineally come from Abraham. She herself was also of the same stock and family; as may be collected from circumstances intimated in the story, and certainly may be deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, with the assertions implying their accomplishment.

Of *Mary*, therefore, by blood and progeny a princess, extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth; not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) especially dear to God;[c] who yet in external condition was very mean and poor, living obscurely in habitation with an artisan, of a painful and not gainful trade.

As for her personal qualifications, they were excellently worthy; for in disposition of mind she was very religious and devout toward God; in the temper of her spirit, very sweet and calm, very modest, meek, and humble: such the passages occurring in the Gospels concerning her do show her to have been; such particularly that most excellent hymn ejaculated by her (wherein we may discover a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable; a devotion full of ardent love, of humble thankfulness, of hearty joy, tempered with most submissive reverence) demonstrateth her to have been.

Of a mother so related, and so qualified, our Saviour was born: both which points were requisite.

She was so related, for the declaration of God's truth, fidelity, and constancy, in accomplishing those ancient predictions and promises made to the Fathers: to Abraham, that *in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed;* to David, that *of the fruit of his loins God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne;* concerning whom, as by many passages in the gospel it appeareth, God's people had a general expectation and persuasion that he should be *the Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch growing out of his roots; in whom the horn of David should bud;* who *should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen, and rule over the kingdom of Jacob for ever:*[a] and that our Lord should be born at Bethlehem, that he should be called a Nazarene, were circumstances touched in the Prophets, for the verification whereof it was needful that the mother of our Lord should be thus related.

She was also to be so duly qualified, as to her state and mind; being homely in state of life, and holy in disposition of mind; to signify, that God doth not so much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this vain world, as the inward frame and temper of spirit.

It is indeed no small disparagement to those empty glories which men are wont so hugely to admire, and it may be a strong inducement to a moderate esteem of them, if we consider it, that God did not choose for the mother of his Son, and Saviour of mankind, a visibly great princess, or any to appearance honourable, splendid, or wealthy personage; but her that was espoused to a mechanic artificer; her that was only rich in grace, and decked with interior endowments; *adorned* (after the garb which St. Peter recommendeth to women) *with the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible purity of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price.*[c] This is the reflection which she herself did make upon the matter; for this *her soul did magnify God, because he had regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden;—he had shewed strength with his arm, he had scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he had put down the mighty from*

* Ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριᾶς Δαβίδ, Luke ii. 4; i. 27.
[c] Luke i. 48.

[a] Gen. xxvi. 4; xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 18; Gal. iii. 8; Acts iii. 25; ii. 15; Isa. xi. 1, 10; Rom. i. 3; xv. 2; Psal. cxxxii. 17; Rev. v. 5; xxii. 16; Amos ix. 11; Acts xv. 16; Luke i. 32; Jer. xxxiii. 15; xxiii. 5; Matt. ii. 5; xxi. 15.
[c] 1 Pet. iii. 4.

their seat, and had exalted the humble and meek; he had filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he had sent empty away.[f] This showeth the extreme folly of contemning the poor, to whom commonly God expresseth so special regard, who are capable of so high favours, who have so glorious consorts of their state.

Such a person did the Son of God choose to bear himself, to bear duty unto, to confer that special favour and eminent honour upon; an honour, among all exterior honours the highest that ever was vouchsafed to any of human kind, or indeed to any mere creature.

I say of exterior honours; for spiritual advantages our Lord himself doth teach us in our esteem to prefer above this great privilege; they being *toto genere* superior, and placing us in a nobler relation to him than this: *Whosoever* (saith he) *shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother;*[g] the same in a more excellent manner and sublime degree is allied, is endeared to me, than he can be upon the score of any carnal kindred: the conformity to him in our mind and affections doth render us nearer to him than any cognation of blood; the having him formed in our hearts is more considerable than the bearing of him in the womb.

Indeed, the mother of our Lord herself, although as such she was κεχαριτωμένη, *especially favoured and graced*, and *blessed among women;*[h] although upon that account *all nations must* esteem and *call her blessed;* although worthily she did in that respect acknowledge that *God had done* μεγαλεῖα, *magnificent and mighty things for her;* yet really, in just esteem, to have Christ born in her soul, to have participated of his divine grace and presence in her heart, the Holy Ghost's having produced a spiritual birth of holy dispositions in her, was a nobler honour and a truer happiness than that: *neither would it* (as St. Chrysostom saith) *have been anywise profitable to her, if she had not been virtuous, to bear Christ in her womb, or to bring forth that admirable birth.** This our Saviour plainly declared, whenas a good woman, transported by the ravishing excellency of his discourse, did cry out, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee,*[i] he thence took occasion to say, *Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.*

We might also here further observe, that our Saviour upon other good accounts willingly did choose so mean a parentage; namely,

That he thence might have readier opportunity to undergo and taste the greatest inconveniences and hardships incident to our nature, thereby more fully meriting and suffering for us:

That he might have occasion to exemplify the most difficult virtues and duties (humility, meekness, patience, contentedness), showing us how we should virtuously comport with the lowest state; how we should cheerfully sustain wants, labours, pains, and disgraces; how we should contentedly be destitute of all the glories, riches, and pleasures of this world:

That also the divine power and glory might appear more conspicuously through his worldly state of impotency and baseness:

That he might insinuate the nature of his kingdom not to consist in secular pomp and puissance, but in spiritual power over the hearts of men:

That he might discover wherein our happiness doth consist; how little any thing, which is high in vulgar esteem of men, is an ingredient thereof: and what is the true grandeur of a man; not his outward garb and retinue, but his inward virtue and goodness.

Finally, this relation of the blessed Virgin to our Lord, as it should beget a precious esteem and honourable memory of her (for let that mouth be cursed which will not call her blessed, let the name of him be branded with everlasting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any queen or empress), so it should not serve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground superstitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among divers sorts of Christians; especially among the adherents to Rome. For,

They (out of a wanton mind, but in

* Οὐδὲ τὸ κυοφορῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν, καὶ τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἐκεῖνον τόκον τεκεῖν ἔχει τι κέρδος, ἀρετῆς οὐκ οὔσης.—Chrys. in Matt. xii. 50.

[f] Luke i. 51.

[g] Matt. xii. 50.

[h] Luke i. 28, 48, 49.

[i] Luke xi. 27.

effect profanely and sacrilegiously) have attributed to her divers swelling and vain names, divers scandalously unsavoury, some hideously blasphemous, titles and elogies, as alluding to, so intrenching upon, the incommunicable prerogatives of God Almighty and of our blessed Saviour; such as *the Queen of Heaven*, *the Health of the World*, *the Mother of Mercies*, *the Spouse of God*, *our Lady* (as if, beside our *unus Dominus*, there were *una Domina* in the church, forgotten by St. Paul), with the like.[j]

They ascribe to her the most sublime attributes of God, together with his most peculiar actions of providence and protection over us, yea of redemption itself.

They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer and praise) to her, and those in a very high manner and strain; professing not only *to serve her* religiously (which the holy scripture chargeth us to do in regard to God and him only), but ὑπερδουλεύειν, to do more than serve her, or to serve her with exceeding devotion.

Who commonly do at the end of their works join, *Praise be to God and to the blessed Virgin*;[k] as if she were to share with God in the glory and gratitude due for blessing or success upon our performances.

All this they do, without any plain reason, any plausible authority, any ancient example, yea manifestly enough against the best reason, the commands of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive church, all which do conspire in appropriating religious adoration to God alone; neither the holy scripture nor the first Fathers excepting the blessed Virgin from the general rule, or taking notice of her as an object of our worship, but nipping the first essays of such a superstition in the Collyridians.

Such groundless and foolish conceits, such dangerous and impious practices, we should carefully beware; the which, as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his service, and thwart his commands, so they indeed do rather greatly discredit, injure, and abuse the blessed Virgin (making her name accessory to such enormous scandals), than they do bring any honour, or do any right to her.

[j] Eph. iv. 5; 1 Cor. viii. 6.
[k] Laus Deo et B. Virgini.

And I doubt not, but, εἴ τις αἴσθησις, if she from her seat of bliss doth behold these perverse services, or absurd flatteries of her, she with holy regret and disdain doth distaste, loathe, disdain, and reject them; with a *Non nobis Domine* (Psal. 115), *Not unto us, O Lord;* and with he angel in the Apocalypse, Ὅρα μή, *See thou do it not.*[l]

Whose greater honour it was, in truth, to be a meek and humble servant, than to be the mother of her Lord and Saviour; it is the chief and truest honour we can do her, to esteem her great modesty and humility, to imitate her piety and grace, after her pattern conscientiously to reverence and obey her Son; unto whom therefore let us with hearty thankfulness render all glory and praise. *Amen.*

Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

SERMON XXV.

1 Cor. i. 23.—*But we preach Christ crucified.**

THE doctrine of the gospel is called *the word of the cross*;† that is, a report concerning our Lord's crucifixion, together with the declaration of the ends, effects, and uses of it; this being a special and main point therein, whereto all the rest are closely allied, and whereon the whole method of our salvation dependeth; a point, which (as St. Paul in this and in several other places doth acquaint us) of all others did find the hardest entertainment among all sorts of people, to whom it was addressed; few auditors being disposed to swallow it, or able to digest it. The Jews were much offended, that one who suffered by their hands in so vile and wretched a manner should be propounded to them as their *Messias* and *King;* the same who, according to their opinions and hopes (grounded on their ancient prophecies plausibly interpreted, and on their constant traditions), was destined to restore them from their afflicted condition, and to rear them into

* Who was crucified (τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον.)
† Λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ,—1 Cor. i. 18.
[l] Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 9; Acts x. 26; xiv. 14.

a high state of prosperity.[a] The pagans took it for an extravagantly foolish conceit, that a person of so mean a quality and so miserable a fortune, should be such as was told them, *the Son of God*, and *Lord of all things*, the author of happiness, and the object of highest adoration to all men; very absurd and abominable this proposition did generally seem to the carnal and worldly prejudices of men, who little could understand, and less would consider, the sublime design thereof; but to those who (being endued with a meek heart, and enlightened by divine grace) did rightly apprehend and duly weigh it, it did afford great satisfaction and comfort; it had on them a most effectual and beneficial influence; proving indeed unto them *the power of God to Salvation;*[b] as raising in them strong hopes of salvation, and engaging them in a practice conducible thereto. Upon this point, therefore, our Lord's ambassadors, the holy apostles, in their preaching chiefly did insist, declaring the great ends and excellent fruits of our blessed Saviour's crucifixion; according to that of St. Paul, *I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*[c]

It is therefore, questionless, a most profitable, and ever (especially now, when our Lord's passion is by the church solemnly commemorated) very seasonable subject of our meditation; apt to excite good thoughts, good affections, and good resolutions in us; and as such, I mean now to recommend and apply it; endeavouring to assist your meditation by suggesting some remarkable particulars concerning it: and in my discourse I shall not so much generally consider the death and passion of our Lord, as the particular manner and kind thereof, by crucifixion; the which we may contemplate, as qualified with divers notable adjuncts; namely, 1. As a suffering in appearance criminal. 2. As most bitter and painful. 3. As most ignominious and shameful. 4. As agreeable and advantageous to the intents of his passion. 5. As completory of ancient presignifications and predictions.* 6. As apt to excite devotion in us, and to enforce on us the practice of our duty.

I. Let us consider it as a suffering in appearance criminal; or a seeming execution of justice upon our Lord, as a malefactor: *He was* (as the prophet foretold) *numbered among the transgressors;* and, *God* (saith St. Paul) *made him sin for us, who knew no sin;*[d] that is, God ordered him to be dealt with as an exceedingly sinful or criminous person, who in himself was perfectly innocent, and void of the least tendency to any fault: so in effect it was that he was impeached of the highest crimes, not only as a violator of the divine law, in breaking the sabbath, in keeping bad company and holding an over-free conversation,[e] but as an impostor, deluding and seducing the people; as a blasphemer, assuming to himself the properties and prerogatives of God; as a seditious and rebellious person, *perverting the nation*, forbidding the payments of tribute to Cæsar, usurping royal authority, and pretending to be *Christ a King;*[f] in general, as a κακοποιὸς, *a malefactor*, or one guilty of notable crimes; so his prosecutors (in the Gospel) did affirm: *If* (said they to Pilate) *he were not a malefactor, we should not have delivered him up unto thee:*[g] as such he was represented and arraigned; and that, although by a sentence wrested from the judge against his conscience by the malicious importunity of his accusers, he was condemned, and in pretence suffered as such, is clear, and admitted by all.

Now whereas any death or passion of our Lord (as being in itself infinitely valuable, and most precious in the sight of God) might have been sufficient toward the accomplishing the general designs of his passion, the expiation of our guilt, the appeasement of God's wrath, the satisfaction of divine justice; it might be inquired, why God should so expose him, and why he should choose to suffer under

[a] Celsus, Orig. lib. ii. p. 83, &c.; lib. i. p. 368; Porphyrius. Aug. de Civ. D. x. 28; Lucian. Jul. apud Cyrill. vi. p. 194; Tryphon. apud Just. (p. 317.)

[b] 1 Cor. i. 18; Rom. i. 16. [c] 1 Cor. ii. 2.

* Tryphon the Jew, in Justin Martyr, doth confess, that Christ, according to the prophecies of holy scripture, was to suffer; but it did offend him that he should suffer in this kind.—*Just. Mart.* p. 317.

[d] Isa. liii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 21.

[e] John v. 18; x. 30; vii. 12.

[f] Luke xxiii. 2; Matt. xxvii. 63.

[g] John xviii. 30.

this odious and ugly character? To satisfy this demand, and that we may the more admire the wisdom and goodness of God in this great dispensation, divers reasons may be assigned, which are intimated in holy scripture, or bear a conformity to its doctrine, why it was so ordered. For,

1. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of greatest meanness and hardship, so upon the like accounts he might be pleased to undergo a death, of all most bitter and uncomfortable: there is nothing to man's nature (especially to honest and ingenuous nature, wherein natural modesty is not extinct) more abominable than such a death: God for good purposes hath planted in our constitution a lively sense of disgrace; and of all disgraces that which proceedeth from an imputation of heinous crimes is most disgustful and pungent; and being conscious of our innocence doth increase the smart; and to reflect upon ourselves dying under it, or leaving the world with an indellible stain upon our name and memory, is yet more grievous; even to languish by degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however sharp disease, would, to any ingenuous person, be far more eligible, than in this manner (of being reputed and treated as a villain) to find a quick and easy dispatch; some touch of which resentment we may conceive breaking forth in our Lord, and somewhat of man's nature discovering itself in that question, *Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?*[h] He did, it seems, as a man, loathe to be prosecuted as a thief; yet he willingly chose it; as he purposely did embrace other the worst of distasteful things belonging to our nature, and incident to that lowly condition into which he did put himself (not only *being made in the likeness of man*, but *taking the form of a servant;*[i]) to endure want, and to fare hardly; to be slighted, envied, hated, scorned, and reproached through the whole course of his life. Had he died in any other way, he had not been so complete a sufferer, nor had tasted the worst of what men can and do endure; there had been a comfort in seeming innocent, which had impaired the perfection of his undertaking. Often was he in danger of death, both from the close machinations, and from the open violences of those who maligned him; but he industriously declined a death so easy, and so honourable, if I may so speak;[j] it not being so disgraceful to fall by private malice, or by sudden rage, as by the solemn and deliberate proceeding of persons in public authority and great credit.

This kind of death he did foresee, and plainly with satisfaction did aim at; he (as we have it related in the Gospels) did show his disciples, that it was incumbent on him (by God's appointment, and his own choice) ὅτι δεῖ ἀυτὸν πολλὰ παθεῖν, *that he ought to suffer many things; to be reprobated by the chief priests, elders and scribes; to be vilified by them;* to be *condemned, and delivered up to the Gentiles,* εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι, *to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified;* as a most flagitious slave.[k]

Thus would our Saviour, in conformity to all the rest of his voluntary afflictions, and for a consummation of them, not only suffer in his body by sore bruises and wounds, in his soul by the bitterest sorrows and agonies; but in his name also and reputation by the foulest scandals; undergoing as well all the infamy, as the infirmity which did belong unto us, or could befall us; thus meaning by all means to express his charity, and exercise his compassion toward us; thus advancing his merit, and yielding the utmost satisfaction to justice in our behalf. Again,

2. Death passing on him as a malefactor by public judgment, did best suit to the nature of his undertaking, was most congruous to his design in suffering, did most aptly represent what he was doing, and imply the reason of his performance. We all were guilty in a most high degree; we deserved an exemplary condemnation; the sharpest pain, together with the greatest shame, was due to us, for our unworthy offending our most great and our most good Lord and Maker; he did undertake in our stead to bear all this, and fully to satisfy for us; he therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment, being reputed, being

[h] Luke xxii. 52; Matt. xxvi. 55.
[i] Phil. ii. 7.
[j] John v. 18; viii. 37, 40, 59; vii. 1, 19, 25; x. 32, 39.
[k] Matt. xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22; Mark ix. 12, Ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι, ἐξουδενοῦσθαι.

termed, being treated as we should have been, in quality of a notorious malefactor, as we in truth are. What we really had acted in dishonouring and usurping upon God, in disordering and troubling the world, in deceiving and perverting others (by our negligent mistakes and our presumptuous miscarriages; by our evil practices and contagious examples), that was imputed to him, and avenged on him: *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all;*[l] he therefore did not only sustain an equivalent punishment, but in a sort did bear an equal blame with us before God and man. Further,

3. Seeing it was determined that our Lord should die for us, and that not in a natural but violent manner, so as perfectly to satisfy God's justice, to vindicate his honour, and to evidence his indignation against our sins; it was most fit that he should perform it in that way, wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernible; wherein it should be most apparent that God did exact and inflict punishment on him, that he did yield unto it, and submissively undergo it. *All judgment*[m] (as Moses said in his charge) *is God's;* or is administered in his name, by authority derived from him; all magistrates being his officers and instruments, by whom he governeth and ordereth the world, his kingdom: whence that which is done in way of formal judgment by persons in authority, God himself may be supposed in a more special and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commission, in his stead, on his behalf; with his peculiar superintendence and guidance: it was therefore in our Saviour a signal act of submission to God's authority and justice, becoming the person which he sustained, of our proxy and redeemer, to undergo such a judgment and such a punishment; whereby he received a doom, as it were, from God's own mouth, uttered by his ministers; and bare the stroke of justice from God's hand, represented by his instruments; wherefore very seasonably and pertinently did he reply to Pilate, avowing his authority under God in those words, *Thou hadst no power over me* (or against me) *except it were given thee from above;*[n] implying, it was in regard to that originally supreme authority of God his Father, and to his particular appointment upon that occasion, that our Saviour did then freely subject himself to those inferior and subordinate powers, as to the proper ministers of divine justice: had he suffered in any other way, by any private malice or passion of men, God's special providence in that case had been less visible, and Christ's obedience not so remarkable; and if he must die by public hands, it must be as a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit; there must be a formal process, how full soever of mockery and outrage; there must be testimonies produced, however false and groundless; there must be a sentence pronounced, although most partial and corrupt: for no man is persecuted by authority without some colour of desert; otherwise it would cease to be public authority, and become private violence; the prosecutor then would put off the face of a magistrate, and appear as a murderer or a thief.

4. In fine, our Saviour perhaps in no other way, with such advantage, could have displayed all kinds of virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, and the furtherance of our benefit, as in this: the judgment-hall, with all the passages leading him thither, and from thence to execution, attended on by guards of soldiers, among the crowds and clamours of the people, were as so many theatres, on which he had opportune convenience, visibly in the eye of the world, to act diverse parts of sublimest virtue; to express his insuperable constancy in attesting truth and maintaining a good conscience, his meekness in calmly bearing the greatest wrongs, his patience in contentedly enduring the saddest adversities; his entire resignation to the will and providence of God; his peaceable submission to the law and power of man; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing, in obliging those, by his good wishes and earnest prayers for their pardon, who in a manner so injurious, so despiteful, so cruel, did persecute him;

[l] Isa. liii. 6. [m] Deut. i.; 2 Chron. xix. 6.

[n] Κατ' ἐμοῦ, John xix. 11.

[o] Matt. xxviii. 14.

yea, in willingly suffering all this for their salvation: all these excellent virtues and graces, by the matter being thus ordered, were in a degree most eminent, and in a manner very conspicuous, demonstrated to the praise of God's name, and the advancement of his truth; for the settlement of our faith and hope; for an instruction and encouragement of good practice to us. Upon such considerations, it might be expedient that he should suffer in this kind as a criminal.

Was Crucified.

SERMON XXVI.

1 Cor. 1. 23.—*But we preach Christ crucified.*

It is added in the Creed, under Pontius Pilate; ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου: in which words the preposition ἐπὶ may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen; in the time of Pontius Pilate's government, or presidency over Judea; so the word ἐπὶ is very frequently used: or it may also further imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion; so that it might also be rendered, *by*, or *under*, Pontius Pilate, as president and judge; thus is the word sometimes used (as for instance, where in the gospel it is said, ἐὰν ἀκουσθῇ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος, *if this be heard by the governor*, or, *if it come to the governor's ear*, as it is rendered in our translation.[a]) Neither of these senses were, I suppose, distinctly, but both rather conjunctly intended here, in relation to the evangelical history; the which (as to the main obvious passages) we are here supposed to know, and do profess to believe: neither do I think any thing more of mystery designed here beyond the full and clear determination of our Saviour's person; or the declaration of whom we do believe in by circumstances most apt and suitable to that purpose; the *time when*, the *person under whom*, and consequently the *place where*, and *manner how*, he suffered. However, all these circumstances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice: let us therefore touch upon them.

1. The *time*, in itself most fit, and most agreeable to divine predictions, doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, doth confirm his veracity, his constancy, and his fidelity: for when the fulness of time was come; when the sceptre of legislation and sovereign authority was just departed from Judah; while the Jewish temple did stand, but was shortly to be destroyed; before the Jews were utterly unsettled and dispersed; when the *seventy hebdomades* (of years) were near expiring, the time when the *Messias should be cut off*;[b] when Judaism was by numerous accession of proselytes diffused over the world, the sacred writings being translated, and legible everywhere; when the world was in the most general peace and deepest calm, consequently men's attention being then more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction and persuasion concerning divine truths; when the most considerable part of the world was united under one empire (or under two, that of the Romans, and that of the Parthians), and thence more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual commonwealth (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction;) when mankind by learning and policy was generally better civilized than ever, more inquisitive after knowledge, and more receptive of truth; when, in short, all things were duly prepared and suited for the great effects designed by God to proceed from our Saviour's passion, and other performances, then did he suffer and do what God had in his wisdom and goodness predetermined, presignified, and predicted. I might add, that the time was fit to be set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncertainty about it.

2. As for the *person* under whom our Lord suffered; if we consider him as a *Roman stranger* (or *Gentile*), or as a *governor* and *judge*; or with regard to his personal qualities; or according to his deportment in this affair; something

[a] Matt. xxviii. 14.

[b] Dan. ix. 26.

in all these respects may present itself observable by us.

He was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel; so Jews and Gentiles conspired in violence and injury against their common Saviour; that so in type and mystery it might be signified how the sins of all men did jointly bring him to his death; *that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.*[c] Neither was it for nothing decreed by God, that the Jews should (as our Saviour foretold) *deliver him up* (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) to the Gentiles, *to mock, and scourge, and crucify him.*[d] The Jews out of envy and malice delivered him up, accused and prosecuted him, instigated and importuned against him; the Gentiles, out of ignorance, profaneness, and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him; whereby the ingratitude, iniquity, and impiety of all mankind did in some sort appear, and was aptly represented; and consequently his immense goodness is demonstrated, who for so impious, unjust, and flagitious a generation, for so malicious enemies, for so cruel persecutors of himself, did willingly suffer:[e] them, who so combined in mischief against him, he then designed to conjoin in reconciliation to God, and in mutual peace and charity toward one another; *reconciling both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*[f]

A *stranger* also was proper for the management of this affair, as apt to be a more fair and indifferent judge; doing what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial for vindication of his personal innocence, and declaration of the iniquity practised against him.

Again, if we consider Pilate as a governor and judge (for so he was, Cæsar's procurator, and president of Judæa, ἐπίτροπος, and ἡγεμὼν he is called;) we therein may discern the wisdom and special providence of God; punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of justice;[g] the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and to man, although in a case of plain outrage and highest injustice against himself; the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed by God to men, and the venerable name of justice, were so abused; for if ever, then one might have said with the Preacher, *I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.*[h]

As for Pilate's personal qualities; he is, by the historians writing near those times, reported to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper; wilful and haughty in spirit; violent, rapacious, and cruel in his proceedings; and was therefore a proper instrument of Providence for execution of such a business: so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so villainous and barbarous according to man's intention; such a person deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so execrably base; was worthy to be employed therein, and ready enough to undergo it: it had not in itself been so plausible that such an act should, nor so credible that it could, proceed from any person otherwise of good disposition or right intention; but for him it was proper, of him it could not be improbable, who by his former violences (such as upon the complaints of this people did soon after, as Josephus telleth,[i] remove him from his charge) had so incensed the Jews, that he would not stick to gratify them in a matter wherein they so earnestly concerned themselves; and which in semblance (setting aside considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest; in yielding up so poor, so as to outward show inconsiderable a person, as a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage: *Pilate* (saith St. Mark) *willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.*[j]

Such an one he was; and yet it is observable, that in comparison to the furious Jews, he behaved himself with some moderation and ingenuity: he was so fair in examination of the case, as, notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecu-

[c] Rom. iii. 19. [d] Matt. xx. 19; xxvii. 18.
[e] Rom. v. 6, 8, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 18.
[f] Eph. ii. 16; Col. i. 20.
[g] Matt. xxvii. 2, &c.
[h] Eccles. iii. 16.
[i] Joseph. Antiq. xviii. 5.
[j] Mark xv. 15, Τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιῆσαι τῷ ὄχλῳ.

tion, to discern the right, and to declare our Saviour guiltless:[k] he was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the Jews, and once, twice, a third time, to challenge them, *Why, what evil hath he done?*[l] As often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea, his will and intention, his earnest desire—) to free the innocent person: yet had he not the heart or the honesty thoroughly to resist their importunities; they were more obstinate in their wicked designs, than he resolute in his good purposes: so partly out of fear to offend them, partly out of favour to oblige them (those two usual corrupters of right judgment), he yielded to them, unworthily suffering himself to be overborne by their wicked solicitations, so sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest and their implacable malice.[m] Thus did the heathen judge behave himself, serving divine Providence, not only in the public and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due unto us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame deserved by himself: in show he condemned our Saviour; in truth he condemned himself, the corrupt judge, and the Jews, the malicious accusers: though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation; affording a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence; such as was requisite to convince all Jewish slanders and aspersions; and sufficient to confirm our faith.

3. Furthermore, the name of Pontius Pilate intimateth the *place* of our Saviour's passion; he being well known to have been governor of Judæa, and to have his tribunal of justice at the mother-city thereof Jerusalem: at Jerusalem, *that bloody city*, as the prophet calls it, whose character it was to be the *killer of the prophets, and the stoner of them who were sent unto her; out of which it was* (in a sort) *impossible*, that a prophet should perish;[n] yet the place of all the world most favoured, and graced by God by special blessings and privileges; at Jerusalem, his own peculiar seat; *the city of God, the city of the great King*, it is styled, the which he *out of all the tribes of Israel, out of all the people of the earth, had chosen to put his name* (to place his especial presence) *there; the holy* and *beloved city*:[o] there at his own doors, as it were, before his own sacred palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged and executed; by procurement of his own servants, peculiarly related to him, the chief priests and elders of his chosen people, persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dignified by him; whose office and especial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to procure, by their instruction and practice, honour to God and obedience to his commandments; which circumstance considered, as it highly advances the goodness of him who willingly suffered there, and by such persons, so it much aggravateth man's ingratitude and iniquity.

I shall now proceed to handle the rest of the particulars which I proposed in the beginning of the last Discourse.

II. We may consider that his suffering was most bitter and painful. We may easily imagine, what acerbity of pain must be endured by our Lord, in his tender limbs being stretched forth, racked, and tentered, and continuing a good time in such a posture; by the *piercing his hands and his feet*, parts exquisitely sensible, with sharp nails (so that, as it is said of Joseph, *the iron entered into his soul*), by abiding exposed to the injuries of sun scorching, wind beating upon, weather searching his grievous wounds and sores:[p] such a pain it was, and that no stupifying, no transient pain, but a pain very acute, and withal lingering; for we see that he, and those who suffered with him, had both presence of mind and time to discourse: even six long hours did he continue under such torture, sustaining in each minute of them beyond the pangs of an ordinary death.[q] But as the case was so hard and sad, so the reason thereof was great, and the fruit an-

[k] John xix. 6; Luke xxiii. 14, &c.

[l] John xix. 12, ἐζήτει.

[m] Luke xxiii. 20; Acts iii. 13, Κρίναντος ἐκείνου ἀπολύειν.

[n] Ezek xxii. 2; xxiv. 6; Luke xiii. 33, 34; Psal. xlviii. 2; lxxxvii. 3; Deut. xii. 5; Neh. xi. 1; Ezra vi. 12.

[o] 1 Kings xi. 32; Matt. iv. 5; xxvii. 53; Rev. xx. 9, &c.

[p] Psal. cv. 18, O. T.

[q] Mark. xv. 25, 34.

swerably excellent; our Saviour did embrace such a passion, that in being thus ready to endure the most grievous smarts for us, he might demonstrate the vehemence of his love; that he might signify the heinousness of our sins, which deserved that from such a Person, so heavy punishment should be exacted; that he might appear to yield a valuable compensation for those everlasting tortures which we should have endured; that he might thoroughly exemplify the hardest duties of obedience and patience. Further,

III. We may consider this sort of punishment, as most sharp and afflictive, so most vile and shameful; being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and *unworthy* (as Lactantius saith) *of a freeman, however nocent or guilty.** It was *servile supplicium*, a punishment never by the Romans, under whose law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon freemen, but only upon slaves, that is, upon people scarce regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited or lost themselves; and among the Jews likewise, that execution which most approached thereto, and in part agreed with it (for they had no so inhuman punishment appointed by their law), hanging up the dead bodies of some who had been executed, was deemed most infamous and execrable; for, *cursed* (said the Law) *is every one that hangeth upon a tree;* cursed, that is, devoted to reproach and malediction; *accursed of God*, it is in the Hebrew; that is, seeming to be deserted by God, or to be exposed to affliction by his special order.†

Indeed, according to course of things, to be raised on high, and for continuance of time to be objected to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous posture, doth breed ill suspicion, doth provoke censure, doth invite contempt, scorn, and obloquy; doth naturally draw forth language of derision, despite, and detestation, especially from the inconsiderate, rude, and hardhearted vulgar; which commonly doth think, speak, deal with men, according to event and appearance (—*sequitur fortunam semper et odit damnatos*), whence θεατρίζεσθαι, *to be made a gazing stock*,[r] or object of reproach to the multitude, is accounted by the apostle as an aggravation of the hardships endured by the primitive Christians: and thus in the highest degree did it happen to our Lord; for we read that the people did in that condition mock, jeer, and revile him; ἐξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπαιζον, ἐβλασφήμουν, they drew up their noses, they shot out their lips, they shaked their heads at him;[s] they let out their wicked and wanton tongues against him; verifying that prediction in the Psalm, *I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people; all they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him:*[t] in this case the same persons who formerly had admired his glorious works, who had been ravished with his excellent discourses, who had followed and favoured him so earnestly, who had blessed and magnified him (for *he*, saith St. Luke, did *teach in their synagogues*, δοξαζόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων, *being glorified by all*,[u]) even those very men did then behold him with pitiless scorn and despite; εἱστήκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν, *the people* (saith St. Luke) *stood gazing upon him*, in correspondence to that in the prophet, *They look and stare upon me;*[v] they looked in a scornful manner, venting contemptuous and spiteful reproaches, as we see reported in the evangelical histories.

Thus did our Saviour *endure the cross, despising the shame;*[w] despising the shame, that is, not simply disregarding or disesteeming it as no evil, with a Stoical haughtiness, or Cynical immodesty; but not eschewing it, or not valuing it as so great an evil, that for declining it he would neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious designs. There is in man's nature an aversation and abhorrency from disgraceful abuse, no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain; whence cruel *mockings and scourgings*[x] we find coupled together, as ingredients of the sore

* Quod etiam homine libero quamvis nocente videatur indignum.—*Lact.* iv. (p. 436.)

† Deut. xxi. 23; Gal. iii. 16;—Τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον τῆς τελευτῆς τὸ εἶδος ὑπὸ ἀρὰν ἔκειτο.—Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61.

[r] Heb. x. 33.

[s] Luke xxiii. 35, 36; Matt. xxvii. 38.

[t] Psal. xxii. 6, 7.

[u] Matt. ix. 33; xxi. 9; xii. 23; Luke iv. 15.

[v] Luke xxiii. 35; Psal. xxii. 17.

[w] Heb. xii. 2.

[x] Heb. xi. 36.

persecutions sustained by God's faithful martyrs; and generally men will more readily embrace, and more contentedly support the latter than the former; pain not so grievously affecting the lower sense, as being insolently despised doth grate on the fancy and wound the mind: for the *wounds* of infamy do, as the Wise Man telleth us, *go down into the innermost parts of the belly*, piercing the very hearts of men, and touching the soul to the quick.[y] We need not therefore doubt but that our Saviour (as a man, endued with human passions and infirmities) was sensible of this natural evil; and that such indignity did add somewhat of bitterness and loathsomeness to his cup of affliction, especially considering that his great charity disposed him to grieve, observing men to act so very indecently, so unworthily, and so unjustly toward him; yet in consideration of the glory that would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to us, of *the joy that was set before him*, when he *should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*, he did most willingly undertake and gladly undergo it: *He became* (as the apostle saith) *a curse for us*, or was exposed to malediction and reviling;[z] he endured *the contradiction* (or obloquy) *of sinful men*, he was *despised, rejected and disesteemed of men;*[a] he in the common apprehesions of men did seem deserted by God, according to that of the prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;* he did himself in a manner seem to concur in that opinion, as by that woful outcry, *Lama sabacthani?* doth appear: so did he become a curse for us, *that* (as the apostle subjoineth) *we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law;* that is, that we might be saved from that exemplary punishment due to our transgressions of the Law; with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and the disgrace before men attending it: he chose thus to *make himself of no reputation*,[b] as the apostle speaketh, being contented to be dealt with as a wretched slave and wicked miscreant, that we might be exempted not only from the torment, but also from the ignominy we had deserved; that we, together with our life, and safety, and liberty, might recover even that honour which we had forfeited.

But lest any one should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferings of our Lord, as things not so rare but that other men have tasted the like; or should be ready to compare them with the sufferings of other virtuous men, as Celsus did with those of Anaxarchus and Epictetus; I shall by the bye interpose somewhat observable concerning them. We may then consider, that not only the infinite excellency of his person, and the perfect innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his sufferings, but some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances, did increase their force: he was not only, according to the frame and temper of human nature, sensibly affected with the pain and shame, and all the rest of evils apparently waiting on his passion; as God (when he did insert sense and passion in our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend that we should be, and as other men in like outward circumstances would have been, but in many respects beyond that ordinary rate; no man, we may suppose, could have felt such grief from them as he did; no man did ever feel any thing comparable to what he did endure: it might be truly applied to him, *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger*, as that extraordinary *sweating great lumps of blood* may argue; as the terms expressing his affliction do intimate; for, in regard to present evils, *his soul* is said to have been *exceedingly sorrowful unto death;* he is said, ἀδημονεῖν, to be in great anguish and anxiety;[c] and to be in an agony, or pang; in respect to mischiefs which he foresaw coming on, he is said ταράττεσθαι τῷ πνεύματι, to be disordered, or *disturbed in spirit*, and ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, to be amazed, or dismayed at them; to such excessive height of passion did the sense of incumbent evils and the prospect of impendent disasters, the apprehension of his own

[y] Prov. xviii. 8; xii. 18.
[z] Heb. xii. 2; Isa. liii. 11; Gal. iii. 13.
[a] Heb. xii. 3; Isa. liii. 3, 4.
[b] Phil. ii. 7.

[c] Lam. i. 22; Περίλυπος ἕως θανάτου, Matt. xxvi. 37, 38; Luke xxii. 44, ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ γίνεσθαι. John xiii. 21; xii. 27; Mark xiv. 33.

case and reflection upon our state, raise him: and no wonder that such a burden the weight of all the sins (the numberless heinous sins and abominations) which he did appropriate to himself, that ever have been, or shall be committed by mankind, lying upon his shoulders, he should feel it heavy, he should seem to crouch and groan under it: *Innumerable evils* (said he in the mystical Psalm) *have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head: therefore my heart faileth me.*[d] God's indignation so dreadfully flaming out against sin might well astonish and terrify him; to stand before the mouth of hell belching out fire and brimstone upon him, to lie down in the hottest furnace of divine vengeance, to undertake with his heart-blood to quench all the wrath of heaven and all the flames of hell (as he did in regard to those who will not rekindle them to themselves), might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpressible pressures of anguish; when such a Father (so infinitely good and kind to him, and whom he so dearly loved) did hide his face from him, did angrily frown on him, how could he otherwise than be sorely troubled? It is not strange, that so hearty a love, so tender a pity, contemplating our sinfulness and sustaining our wretchedness, should be deeply affected thereby; any one of those persons, who fondly do pretend to, or vainly glory in, a stupid apathy, or in a stubborn contempt of the evils incident to our nature and state, would in such a case have been utterly dejected; the most resolved philosopher would have been dashed into confusion at the sight, would have been crushed to despair under the sense of those calamities which assaulted our Lord. With the greatness of the causes, the goodness of his constitution might also conspire to augment his suffering; for surely, as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, his affections most pliant and tractable; so accordingly should the impressions upon him be most sensible, and consequently the pains which he felt both in soul and body most sharp and afflictive. That we in like cases are not alike affected, that we do not tremble at the apprehensions of God's displeasure, that we are not affrighted with the sense of our sins, that we do not with sad horror resent our own danger or our misery, doth arise from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of those things, or that they do not in so clear and lively a manner strike our mind and fancy (not appearing in their true nature and proper shape, so heinous and so hideous, as they really in themselves and in their consequences are), or because that we have but weak persuasions about them; or because we do but slightly consider them; or from that our hearts are hard and callous, our affections cold and dull, so that nothing of this nature (nothing beside gross material affairs) can easily move or melt them; or for that we have in us small love to God, and little regard to our own true welfare; for that briefly in respect to spiritual matters we are neither so wise, so serious, so sober, nor so good and ingenuous in any reasonable measure, as we ought to be: but our Saviour in all these respects was otherwise disposed; he most evidently discerned the wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to his imagination and spirit; he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew all that God's law had declared about them; he thoroughly did consider and weigh them; his heart was most soft and sensible; his affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects; he was full of dutiful love to God his Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will toward us; whence it is not marvellous, that as a man, as a transcendently good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences; that his imagination was so troubled, and his affections so mightily stirred by them; so that he thence truly did suffer in a manner and to a degree unconceivable; according to that ejaculation in the Greek liturgies, Διὰ τῶν ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, Χριστέ· *By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us.* But, further,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering had in it some particular advan-

[d] Psal. xl. 12.

tages conducing to the accomplishment of our Lord's principal design.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent time, were good advantages; for if he had been privately made away, or suddenly despatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction (his most divine patience, meekness, and charity), so illustriously shone forth: wherefore (to prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, and for other collateral good purposes) divine Providence did so manage the business, that as the course of his life, so also the manner of his death should be most conspicuous and remarkable; *These things* (as St. Paul told king Agrippa) *were not done in a corner;*[e] and, *I* (said our Lord himself) *spake freely to the world, and in secret have I done nothing;*[f] so were the proceedings of his life, not close or clancular, but frank and open; not presently hushed up, but carried on leisurely in the face of the world; that men might have the advantage to observe and examine them. And as he lived, so he died most publicly and visibly, the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and thence ready to embrace his doctrine; according to what he did himself foretell, *I being lifted up from the earth shall draw all men unto me;*[g] he drew all men by so remarkable a death to take notice of it, he drew some from the wondrous consequences of it to believe on him: and, *As* (saith he again) *Moses did exalt the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted:*[h] the elevation of that mysterious serpent upon a pole did render it visible, and attracted the eyes of people toward it; whereby God's power invisibly accompanying that sacramental performance, they were cured of those mortiferous stings which they had received; so our Lord being mounted on the cross, allured the eyes of men to behold, and their hearts to close with him; whereby, the heavenly virtue of God's spirit co-operating, they became saved from those destructive sins, which by the Devil's serpentine instigations they had incurred.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was, that by it the nature of that kingdom, which he intended to erect, was evidently signified: that it was not such as the carnal people did expect, an external, earthly, temporal kingdom, consisting in domination over the bodies and estates of men, dignified by outward wealth and splendour, managed by worldly power and policy, promoted by force and terror of arms, affording to men the advantages of outward safety, peace, and prosperity; but a kingdom purely spiritual, heavenly, eternal; consisting in the government of men's hearts and spirits; adorned with endowments of piety and virtue, administered by the grace and guidance of God's holy Spirit, maintained and propagated by meek instruction, by virtuous example, by hearty devotion and humble patience; rewarding its loyal subjects with spiritual joys and consolations here, with endless rest and bliss hereafter;[i] no other kingdom could he be presumed to design, who submitted to this dolorous and disgraceful way of suffering; no other exploits could he pretend to achieve by expiring on a cross; no other way could he govern who gave himself up to be managed by the will of his enemies; no other benefits would that forlorn case allow him to dispense; so that well might he then assert, *My kingdom is not of this world,*[j] when he was going in this singular manner to demonstrate that great truth. It was a touchstone to prove men's disposition, and to discriminate the ingenuous, well-disposed, humble and sober persons, who would entertain our Lord's heavenly doctrine with acceptance, notwithstanding these disadvantages, *not being offended in him,* from those perverse, vain, proud, profane people, who being scandalized at his adversity, would reject him.

Another advantage was this, that by it God's special providence was discovered, and his glory illustrated, in the propagation of the gospel; for how could it be, that a person of so low parentage, of so mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent so woful and despicable a kind of death, falling under the pride and spite of his adversaries, should so easily gain so

[e] Acts xxvi. 26. [f] John xviii. 20.
[g] John xii. 32. [h] John xiii. 14.
[i] Rom. xiv. [j] John xviii. 36.

general an opinion in the world (among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons), of being *the Lord of life and glory?*[k] how, I say, could it be, that such a miracle should be effected without God's aid and special concurrence? That Herod, who from a long reign in a flourishing state, with prosperous success in his undertakings, got the name of Great; or that Vespasian, who triumphantly did ascend the imperial throne, should either of them by a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously or in flattery, be deemed the Messias, is not so very strange: but that one who so miserably was trampled on, and treated as a wretched caitiff, should instantly conquer innumerable hearts, and from such a depth of extreme adversity should attain the sublimest pitch of glory; that *the stone which the builders* with so much scorn *did refuse, should become the head stone of the corner, this* (with good assurance we may say) *is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*[l] It may well be so, and thereby *the excellency*[m] of divine power and wisdom was much glorified; by so impotent, so implausible and improbable means, accomplishing so great effects; subduing the world to his obedience, not by the active valour of an illustrious hero, but through the patient submission of a poor, abused, and oppressed person; restoring mankind to life by the death of a crucified Saviour.

Again, this kind of suffering to the devout fathers did seem many ways significant, or full of instructive and admonitive emblems; being a rich and large field for a devout fancy to range with affectionate meditation.

His posture on the cross might represent unto us that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth his arms of kindness, pity, and mercy, with them, as it were, to embrace the world, receiving all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection.*

It might exhibit him as earnestly wooing and entreating us to return unto God, accepting the reconciliation which he then was purchasing, and did then offer to us: *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people,*[n] said God of old, doing it then mediately and figurately by his prophets, but he did so now immediately and properly by himself; the cross being as a pulpit, from which our Lord, *God blessed for ever*, did himself in person earnestly preach the overtures of grace, did exhort to repentance, did tender the remission of sin, with action most pathetical and affecting.

His ascent to the cross might set forth his discharging that high office of universal High Priest for all ages and all people; the cross being an altar, whereon he did offer up his own flesh, and pour forth his blood, as a pure and perfect sacrifice, propitiating God and expiating the sins of mankind.*

His elevation thither may suggest to our thoughts, that submission to God's will, suffering for truth and righteousness, the exercises of humility and patience, are conjoined with exultation, do qualify for, and in effect procure, true preferment; so that the lower we stoop in humility, the higher we shall rise in favour with God, the nearer we shall approach to heaven, the surer we shall be of God's blessing, according to that aphorism of our Lord, *Whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted.* The cross was a throne, whereon humility and patience did sit in high state and glorious majesty, advanced above all worldly pride and insolence; it was a great step, a sure ascent, unto the celestial throne of dignity superlative;[o] for because our Lord *was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God far exalt him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth,* as St. Paul doth teach us.[p]

O the fallacy of human sense! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auspicious or more happy than this event, which had so dismal an aspect, and provoked so contemptuous scorn in some, so grievous pity in others: the devil thought he had done bravely, when he had by his suggestions brought the Son

* Extendit in passione manus suas, &c.—*Lact.* iv. p. 437.

[k] Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61.

[l] Psal. cxviii. 22, 23.

[m] 2 Cor. iv. 7; 1 Cor. i. 27.

* Levit. ix. 22; 2 Chron. iv. 1; Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 82,—Quod unquam sacrificium sacratius fuit, quam quod verus Pontifex altari crusis per immolationem suæ carnis imposuit?—*Leo M.* Ep. 83.

[n] Isa. lxv. 2.

[o] Luke xviii. 4; Matt. xxiii. 12; 1 Pet. v. 5; James iv. 10.

[p] Phil. ii. 8, 9.

of God into this case; the world supposed itself highly prosperous in its attempts against him; but O how blind and foolish is malice, which then doth most hurt itself, when it triumpheth in the mischief which it doeth to others! How impotent is wickedness, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greatest success! for by thus striving to debase our Lord, they most highly did advance him; by thus crossing our salvation, they most effectually did promote it.

Further, looking up to the cross may admonish us how our salvation is acquired, and whence it doth proceed; not by casting our eyes downward, not from any thing that lieth upon earth; but *our help cometh from above*, our salvation is attained by looking upwards; we must lift up our eyes to behold our Saviour procuring it, we must raise up our hearts to derive it from him.

Our Lord's crucifixion may also intimate to us, how our flesh must be dealt with, and to what usage we must submit it; for we must not only imitate our Saviour in his holy life, but in some manner should resemble him in his ghastly death; being, as St. Paul speaketh, *conformable to his death*, and *planted together with him in the likeness of it: mortifying our earthly members, crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts;* having our *old man crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed.*[q] His death may fitly shadow our death to sin, his grievous pain the bitterness of our repentance, wherein our souls should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails; his shame, that confusion of mind which regard to our offences should produce within us.

Reflecting on him, we may also discern our state here; wherein, if we will be truly and thoroughly virtuous, we must be exposed to envy and hatred, to censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to affliction and hardship;* every good man must hang on some cross; εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα, *We are* (saith St. Paul) *appointed to this;*[r] it is our lot and portion assigned to us by divine immutable decree; being *predestinated to a conformity with this image of God's Son. We must* (as he did) *by many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God: All that will live godlily in Christ Jesus shall certainly suffer persecution*, one way or other partaking of his cross.[s]

Divers such analogies and resemblances devout meditation might extract from this matter, suggesting practical truths, and exciting good affections in us.

V. We may (for the confirmation of our faith, and begetting in us a due adoration of the divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient prophecies foretelling, and the typical representation foreshowing it.

That most famous, clear, and complete prophecy concerning the passion, doth express him suffering as a malefactor (*he was reckoned among the transgressors*), suffering in a manner very painful (he was *wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*), suffering in a most ignominious way (he was *despised and rejected of men, as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief*,[t]) which circumstances could scarce so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering, or punishment then used, as to this.

In the 22d Psalm, the royal prophet describeth an afflicted and forlorn condition, such as by no passages in the story concerning him doth in the full extent, and according to the literal signification of his words, appear suitable to his person, which therefore is more properly to be accommodated unto the Messias, whom he did represent; and in that description, among other passages agreeing to our Lord, these words do occur; *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet:*[u] which words how patly and livelily do they set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross, and treated in that cruel and in

* Passio ipsa per se acerba et amara specimen nobis futurorum tormentorum debat, quam in hoc seculo morantibus virtus ipsa proponit. —*Lact.* lib. iv.

[q] Συμμορφούμενοι τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ,—Phil. iii. 10; Rom. vi. 5; Gal. ii. 20; v. 24; Col. iii. 5; Rom. viii. 13.

[r] 1 Thess. iii. 3.

[s] Rom. viii. 29; Acts xiv. 22; 2 Tim. iii. 12.

[t] Isa. liii. 12, 5, 3; Mark xv. 28.

[u] Psal. xxii. 15, 16.

that shameful way by his malicious adversaries!

In the prophet Zechariah, God speaking in his own name, *They* (namely some of the Jews, being sensible of what they had acted, and penitently affected for it, they) *shall look upon me, whom they have pierced* :[v] which words need no violence to wring from them the right meaning, no comment to explain them, in accommodation to that matter, to which the Evangelists do apply them, and to which they are so literally congruous.

The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types. Isaac, the immediate *heir of the promise*, in whom the faithful seed was called and conveyed down, and so a most apt type of our Saviour, being devoted and offered up to God, did himself bear the wood by which he was to be offered :[w] so did our Saviour, the promised seed, in *whom all nations should be blessed*, himself bear the cross by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God.

Those who were dangerously bitten by fiery serpents, were, by looking upon a brasen serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life, which (according to most authentic exposition) did represent the salvation which should proceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross to us, who had been mortally struck and stung by that old serpent's poisonous insinuations.[x]

The paschal lamb was a most congruous emblem of *Christ our passover*[y] (that most innocent and meek, most unblemished and spotless Lamb, slain for the sins of the world.) It was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel, its blood was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its body was not to be eaten raw, nor sodden with water, but roasted whole, and dressed upon a spit; nor were any of its bones to be broken :[z] which circumstances, with so exact caution and care prescribed, how they justly suit and fitly adumbrate this manner of our Saviour's passion, I need not otherwise than by the bare mention of them declare; every one easily being able to compare and adapt them.

VI. Lastly, the consideration of our Lord's thus suffering is applicable to our practice; being most apt to instruct and affect us; admonishing us of our duty and exciting us to a conscionable performance thereof: no contemplation indeed is more fruitful, or more efficacious toward the sanctification of our hearts and lives, than this of the cross; for what good affection may not the meditation on it kindle? what virtue may it not breed and cherish in us?

1. How can it otherwise than inflame our heart with love toward our Lord, to think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of shame, he did willingly undertake, and gladly endure for us? No imagination can devise a greater expression of charity and friendship; and if love naturally is productive of love, if friendship meriteth a correspondence in kindness, what effect should the consideration of such ineffable love, of so incomparable friendship, have upon us?[a]

2. How can a reflection on this case otherwise than work hearty gratitude in us? Suppose any person for our sake (that he might rescue us from the greatest mischiefs, and purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should deprive himself of all his estate, his honour, his ease, and pleasure, should expose himself to extremest hazards, should endure the sorest pains and most disgraceful ignominies, should prostitute his life, and lose it in the most hideous manner: should we not then be monstrously ingrateful, if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment and all the requital we were able? The case in regard to our Lord is the same in kind; but in degree, whatever we can suppose, doth infinitely fall below the performances for us of him who stooped from the top of heaven, who laid aside the felicity and majesty of God, for the sorrows and infamies of the cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and procure to us the joys of heaven; so that our obligation to grat-

[v] Zech. x. 20; John xix. 37.

[w] Gen. xxii.; Rom. ix. 8; James ii. 21; Heb. xi. 17.

[x] Tert. c. Jud. cap. 10

[y] 1 Pet. i. 19.

[z] Exod. xii. 5, 6, 9, 46.

[a] John xv. 13; Eph. v. 2, 25; Gal. ii. 20; Rev. i. 5; Eph. iii. 19.

itude is unexpressibly great, and we are extremely unworthy, if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable.

3. What surer ground of faith in God, or stronger encouragement of hope, can there be, than is hence afforded to us? for *if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for our sake* to the suffering of these bitter pains and contumelies;[b] how can we in any case distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy? *How* (as St. Paul argueth) *shall he not also with him freely give us all things?* What higher favour could God express, what lower condescension could he show; how more plainly or surely could he testify his willingness and his delight to do us good, than by ordering the Son of his love to undergo these most grievous things for us? How, consequently, could there be laid a stronger foundation of our hope and entire confidence in God?

4. What greater engagement (in general) can there be to obedience, than to consider how readily and cheerfully our Lord did submit to the will of God, in bearing the most heavy yoke that could be imposed on him, in drinking the most bitter cup that could be tempered for him: how that he *did humble himself, being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross?*[c] how dearly he did purchase his property in us, and dominion over us?

What detestation of our sins must the serious consideration of this event produce in us! of our sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches on our blessed Redeemer! Judas the wretch who betrayed him, the Jewish priests who did accuse and prosecute him, the wicked rout which abused and insulted over him, those cruel hands that smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorned him, those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled him, all those who anywise were instruments or abettors of his affliction, how do we loathe them! how do we detest and curse their memories! But how much greater reason have we to abominate our sins, which were the principal causes of all that woful tragedy! *He was delivered for our offences;* they were indeed the traitors, which by the hands of Judas delivered him up: *He that knew no sin was made sin for us;*[d] that is, was accused, was condemned, was executed as a sinner for us: it was therefore we who by our sins did impeach him; the spiteful priests were but our advocates; we by them did adjudge and sentence him; Pilate (against his will and conscience) was but our spokesman; we by him did inflict that horrid punishment on him; the Roman executioners were but our agents therein: *He became a curse for us;*[e] that is, all the mockery, derision, and contumely he endured did proceed from us; the silly people were but properties, acting our parts; our sins were they that cried out *Crucifige!* (*Crucify him! crucify him!*) with clamours more loud and more effectual than did all the Jewish rabble; it was they which by the borrowed throats of that base people did so outrageously persecute him: *He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;*[f] it was they which by the hands of the fierce soldiers and of the rude populacy, as by senseless engines, did buffet and scourge him; they by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh and rend his sacred body: upon them therefore it is most just and fit that we should turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indignation.

5. And what in reason can be more powerful to the breeding in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflecting upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins? how can we but earnestly grieve, when we consider ourselves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the murderers of a person so innocent and lovely, of one so great and glorious, of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of our own best friend, and most kind Saviour!

6. If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby melt us into contrition, yet surely this consideration must needs produce some fear within us;[g] for can we at least otherwise than tremble to think upon the heinous guilt of our sins, upon the fierceness of God's wrath against them, upon the severity of divine judgment for them, all so manifestly discov-

[b] Rom. viii. 32.
[c] Phil. ii. 8.
[d] Rom. iv. 25; 2 Cor. v. 21.
[e] Gal. iii. 13.
[f] Isa. liii. 5.
[g] (Matt. xxvii. 45, 51; Luke xxiii. 44.)

ered, all so livelily set forth in this dismal spectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in us some terror, some dread of the law, some reverence toward authority, what awful impressions should this singular example of divine justice work upon us! How greatly we should be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the most inanimate creatures: the whole world did seem affected thereat with horror; the frame of things was disturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it; the sun (as out of aversion or shame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackness; the bowels of the earth did yearn and quake; the rocks were rent; the vail of the temple was torn quite through; graves did open, and the bodies did wake: and can we (who are most concerned) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsy than buried carcasses, the most insensible and immoveable things in nature?

7. How also can it but hugely deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider that by it we do, as the apostle teacheth, *recrucify the Son of God, and* again *expose him to open shame;** bringing upon the stage, and acting over all that direful tragedy; renewing (as to our guilt) all that pain and that disgrace to him; that we thereby, as he telleth us, do *trample upon the Son of God, and prize the blood of the covenant*) that most sacred and precious blood, so freely shed for the demonstration of God's mercy, and the ratification of his gracious intentions toward us) *as a common thing*,[h] of no special worth or consideration with us; despising all his so kind and painful endeavours for our salvation; defeating his most gracious purposes and earnest desires for our welfare; rendering all his so bitter and loathsome sufferings, in regard to us, altogether vain and fruitless, yea indeed hurtful and pernicious; for if the cross do not save us from our sins, it will sorely aggravate their guilt, and augment their punishment, bringing a severer condemnation and a sadder ruin on us.

8. It may also yield great consolation and joy to us, to contemplate our Lord upon the cross, expressing his immense goodness and charity toward us; transacting our redemption; expiating our sins, and sustaining our miseries; combating and defeating all the adversaries of our salvation.

Is it not comfortable and pleasant to behold him there standing erect, not only as a resolute sufferer, but as a glorious conqueror; where *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a solemn show, triumphing over them?*[i] No conqueror loftily seated in his triumphal chariot did ever yield a spectacle so gallant or magnificent; no tree was ever adorned with trophies so pompous or precious. To the external view and carnal sense of men, our Lord was then exposed to scorn and shame; but to spiritual and true discerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up, as objects of contempt, quite overthrown and undone: there the Devil, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς, that *strong* and sturdy *one*, did hang, bound and fettered, disarmed and spoiled, utterly baffled and confounded.[j] There death itself hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled;[k] his death having prevented ours, and purchased immortality for us. There the world, with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its fondly admired excellences, its bewitching pleasures, did hang up, all disparaged and defaced, as it appeared to St. Paul: *God forbid* (said he) *that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* There *our sins*, those sins which, as St. Peter saith, our Saviour *did carry up into the gibbet*, did hang, as marks of his victorious prowess, as objects of our horror and hatred, as malefactors by him *condemned in the flesh.*[l] There that manifold enmity (enmity between God and man, between one man and another, between man and his own self, or conscience) did hang *abolished in his flesh*, and *slain upon the cross; by the blood whereof he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth.*[m] The blood of the

* ἀνασταυροῦν.—Heb. vi. 6.

[h] Heb. x. 29.

[i] Col. ii. 15.

[j] Matt. xii. 29; Luke xi. 22; Heb. ii. 14.

[k] 1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Tim. i. 10.

[l] Ἀνήνεγκεν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, 1 Pet. ii. 24; Rom. vii. 3.

[m] Col. i. 10; Eph. ii. 15, 16.

cross was the cement, joining the parts of the world. There, together with all our enemies, did hang all those causes of woe and misery to us, those yokes of bondage, those instruments of vexation, those hard laws, which did so much burden and encumber men, did set them at such distance and variance, did so far subject them to guilt and condemnation; all *that bond of ordinances*, inducing our obligation to so grievous forfeitures and penalties, was *nailed to the cross*,[n] being cancelled and expunged by our Saviour's performances there.

9. This consideration is a strong inducement to the practice of charity toward our neighbour: for can we forbear to love those, toward whom our Lord bore such tender affection, for whom he did sustain so woful tortures and indignities? Shall we not, in obedience to his most urgent commands, in conformity to his most notable example, in grateful return to him for his benefits, who thus did suffer for us, discharge this most sweet and easy duty toward his beloved friends? Shall we not comport with an infirmity, or bear a petty neglect, or forgive a small injury to our brother, whenas our Lord did bear a cross for us, and from us, obtaining pardon for our numberless most heinous affronts and offences against God? It is St. Paul's reasoning: *We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak—for even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*[o] Can we hear our Lord say, *This is my command, That ye love one another, as I have loved you;* and, *Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another:*[p] can we hear St. Paul exhorting, *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour:*[q] can we consider St. John's arguing, *Beloved, if God so loved us, then ought we also to love one another: Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren?*[r] can, I say, we consider such discourses, without being disposed to comply with them for the sake of our crucified Saviour; all whose life and death were nothing else but one continual recommendation and enforcement of this duty?[s]

10. Furthermore, What can be more operative than this consideration toward breeding a disregard of this world, with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous delights; toward reconciling our minds to the worst condition it can bring us into; toward supporting our hearts under the heaviest pressures of affliction it can lay upon us? How can we refuse, in submission to God's pleasure, to bear contentedly a slight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore a cross, infinitely more grievous to carnal will and sense than any that can befall us? Can we expect, can we affect, can we desire great prosperity, whenas the Son of God, our Lord and Master, did only taste such adversity? Who can admire those splendid trifles which our Lord did never regard in his life; which at his death did only serve to mock and abuse him? Who can relish those sordid pleasures, of which he living did not vouchsafe to taste, and the contraries whereof he dying choose to feel in all extremity? Who will dare to vilify, to disdain, to reject a state of sorrow or disgrace, which he by a voluntary susception of it hath so dignified and graced; by which we resemble and become conformable to him;[t] by which we concur and partake with him; yea, by which we may promote, and in a sort complete, his designs; *filling up* (as St. Paul speaketh) *that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh?*[u] Who now can much prefer being esteemed, applauded, approved, or favoured by men, before infamy, reproach, derision, or persecution from them, especially when those do follow conscientious adherence to righteousness? Who can be very ambitious of worldly honour or repute, covetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who observeth the only Son of God choosing rather to hang upon a cross than to sit upon a throne; inviting the clamours of spite and scorn, rather than acclamations of blessing and

[n] Col. ii. 14.
[o] Rom. xv. 1, 3.
[p] John xv. 12; xiii. 35.
[q] Eph. v. 2.
[r] 1 John iv. 11; iii. 16.
[s] 1 Pet. iv. 1.
[t] Rom. viii. 17.
[u] Phil. iii. 10; Rev. i. 9; 1 Pet. iv. 13; Col. i. 24, Ἀντανακλῶσιν τὰ στερήματα.

praise; divesting himself of all secular pomp, plenty, conveniences, and solaces; embracing the garb of a slave and the repute of a malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a prince, which were his due, and which he easily could have obtained?* Can we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and prosperous in this world, to swim here in affluence and pleasure; can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants or straits here, seeing the fountain of all happiness did himself condescend to so forlorn a state, and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer? If with the eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groaning under extreme anguish of pain, encompassed with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding* (as the prophet foretold of him) *his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from shame and spitting;*[v] will not the imagination of such a sight dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all the glee which we can find in any wild frolics or riotous merriments?

11. It is surely a great commendation of afflictions, and a strong consolation under them, to ponder well this point; for if hardship was to our Lord a school of duty, *he* (as the apostle saith) *learning obedience from what he suffered;*† if it was to him an instrument of perfection, as the same apostle implieth, when he saith, that *it became God to perfect the Captain of our salvation by suffering;*[w] if it was a means of procuring the Divine favour even to him, as those words import, *Therefore the Father loveth me, because I lay down my life;*[x] if it was to him a step unto glory, according to that saying, *Was not Christ to suffer, and so to enter into his glory?*[y] yea, if it was a ground of conferring on him that sublimest pitch of dignity above all creatures, as we are taught; for *because* (saith St. Paul) *he was obedient to death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God exalt him, and give him a name above every name;*[z] and, *We see Jesus* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour;*[a] and, *Worthy* (crieth out the heavenly society in the Revelations) *is the Lamb that was slain,* and *who redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength and honour, and glory, and blessing;*[b] if affliction did minister such advantages to him; and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it with like submission, humility, and patience, it may afford the like to us, what reason can there be, that we should anywise be discomposed, discouraged, or disconsolate under it? Much more reason surely there is, that with St. Paul and all the holy apostles we should boast, rejoice, and exult in our tribulations; far more cause we have with them to esteem it a favour, a privilege, and an ornament to us, than to be discontented or displeased therewith. To do thus is a duty incumbent on us as Christians: for *he* (saith our Master) *that doth not take up his cross, and follow me, is not worthy of me: He that doth not carry his cross, and go after me, cannot be my disciple:* he that doth not willingly take the cross, when it is presented to him by God's hand;[c] he that doth not contentedly bear it, when it is by Providence imposed on him, is nowise worthy of the honour to wait on Christ; he is not capable to be reckoned among the disciples of our heavenly Master; he is not worthy of Christ, as not having the courage, the constancy, the sincerity required of a Christian; of one pretending to such great benefits, such high privileges, such excellent rewards, as Christ our Lord and Saviour doth propose; he cannot be Christ's disciple, showing such incapacity to learn those needful lessons of humility and patience dictated by him; declaring such an indisposition to transcribe those copies

* Cogitemus crucem ejus, et divitias lutum putabimus.—*Hier. Ep.* ii. *ad Nepot.*——Quis beatam vitam esse arbitretur in iis, quæ contemnenda esse docuit filius Dei?—*Aug. de Ag. Ch.* c. 11.

† Ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθε,—Heb. v. 8.

[v] Isa. l. 6.

[w] Heb. ii. 10.

[x] John x. 17.

[y] Luke xxiv. 26.

[z] Phil. ii. 9.

[a] Heb. ii. 9.

[b] Rev. v. 12, (9.)

[c] Rom. v. 3; Col. i. 24; Matt. v. 12; Luke vi. 23; Phil. i. 29; Acts v. 41; James i. 2; Heb. x. 34; 1 Pet. i. 7; Heb. xii.—1 Cor. i. 4; Luke xiv. 27; ix. 23; Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24.

of submission to the divine will, self-denial and self-resignation, so fairly set him by the instruction and example of Christ:[d] *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind;*[e] and, *Christ suffered for us, leaving us as an example, that we should follow his steps*, saith St. Peter.[f]

12. The willing susception and the cheerful sustenance of the cross is indeed the express condition, and the proper character of our Christianity;[g] in signification whereof it hath been from immemorial time a constant usage to mark those who enter into it with the figure of the cross. The cross, as the instrument by which our peace with God was wrought, as the stage whereon our Lord did act the last part of his miraculous obedience, consummating our redemption;* as the field wherein the *Captain of our salvation* did achieve his noble victory, and erect his glorious trophies over all the enemies thereof, was well assumed to be the badge of our profession, the ensign of our spiritual warfare, the pledge of our constant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in relation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our great joy and sole glory doth consist; for *God forbid*† (saith St. Paul) *that I should glory save in the cross of Christ.*

Let it be *to the Jews a scandal*, or offensive to their fancy, prepossessed with expectations of a Messias flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity; let it be *folly to the Greeks*, or seem absurd to men imbued (puffed up, corrupted) with fleshly notions and maxims of worldly craft, disposing men to value nothing which is not grateful to present sense or fancy; that God should put his own most beloved Son into so very sad and despicable a condition; that salvation from death and misery should be procured by so miserable a death; that eternal joy, glory, and happiness should issue from these fountains of extreme sorrow and shame;[h] that a person in external semblance devoted to so opprobrious and slavish usage should be the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the King and Judge of all the world; let this doctrine, I say, be scandalous and distasteful to some persons tainted with prejudice; let it appear strange and incredible to others blinded with self-conceit; let all the proud, all the profane, all the inconsiderate part of mankind slight and reject it; yet to us it must appear grateful and joyous; to us it is πιστὸς λόγος, *a faithful* (and credible) *proposition, worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world thus to save sinners:*[i] to us, who discern by a clearer light, and are endued with a purer sense, kindled by the divine Spirit, from whence, with comfortable satisfaction of mind, we may apprehend and taste that God could not in a higher measure, or a fitter manner illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness and justice, his infinite grace and mercy toward his poor creatures, his holy displeasure against wickedness, his impartial severity in punishing iniquity, and impiety, or in vindicating his own honour and authority, than by thus ordering his Son to suffer for us; that also true virtue and goodness could not otherwise be taught, be exemplified, be commended and impressed with greater advantage.[j]

We might allege the suffrages of eminent philosophers, persons esteemed most wise by improvement of natural light, who have declared, that perfection of virtue can hardly be produced or expressed otherwise than by undergoing most sharp afflictions and tortures;* and that God therefore, as a wise Father, is wont with them to exercise those whom he best loveth: we might also produce instances of divers persons, even among Pagans,† most famous and honourable in the judgment of all posterity for their singular virtue and wisdom, who were tried in this furnace, and thereby shone most brightly; their suffering, by the iniquity and ingratitude, by the envy and malignity of their times, in their reputa-

* Τὸ τρόπαιον τοῦ σταυροῦ,—Apost. Const. viii. 12.

† Ἐμοὶ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι, Gal. vi. 14; 1 Cor. i. 23.

[d] Matt. xi. 29; ὑπογραμμὸν ὑπολιμπάνων, 1 Pet. ii. 21. [e] 1 Pet. iv. 1.

[f] 1 Pet. ii. 21. [g] Naz. Orat. 38, ad fin.

[h] Orig. in Cels. lib. ii. p. 79.

* Plat. de Rep. ii. p. 594.—Magnum exemplum, nisi mala fortuna non invenit.—*Sen. de Prov.* iii. Plut. de Stoic. contr. p. 1931.

† Socrates, Phocion, Thraseas, Aristides, &c.—*Vide* Ælian. Var. xi. 9, 2, 43.

[i] 1 Tim. i. 15; 2 Tim. ii. 11.

[j] Grot. de Ver. iv. 12.

tion, liberty, and life; their undergoing foul slanders, infamous punishments, and ignominious deaths, more than any other practices of their life, recommending them to the regard and admiration of future ages;* although none of them, as our Lord, did suffer of choice, or upon design to advance the interests of goodness, but upon constraint, and irresistible force put on them; none of them did suffer in a manner so signal, with circumstances so rare, and with events so wonderful; yet suffering as they did was their chief glory; whence it seemeth, that even according to the sincerest dictates of common wisdom this dispensation was not so unaccountable; nor ought the Greeks, in consistency with themselves, and in respect to their own admired philosophy, to have *deemed our doctrine* of the cross *foolish*, or unreasonable.

To conclude: since thereby a charity and humanity so unparalleled (far transcending theirs who have been celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to their country or kindness to their friends), a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical, were manifested for the instruction and direction of men; since never were the vices and the vanities of the world (so prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) so remarkably disparaged; since never any suffering could pretend to so worthy and beneficial effects, the expiation of the whole world's sin, and reconciliation of mankind to God, such as no performance beside, nor any other sacrifice, did ever aim to procure; since, in fine, no virtue had ever so glorious rewards, as sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, and eternal happiness to those who imitate it; since, I say, there be such excellent uses and fruits of the cross borne by our blessed Saviour, we can have no reason to be offended at it, or ashamed of it; but with all reason heartily we should approve and humbly adore, as well the deep wisdom of God, as all other his glorious attributes illustriously displayed therein: to whom, therefore, as is most due, let us devoutly render all thanks, all praise, and glory.

And, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.[k] Amen.

* Cicuta Socratem magnum fecit, &c.—*Sen. Ep.* 13, et 67, et 104; (Sen. Ep. 81, 113.)

Rutilii innocentia ac virtus laterest, nisi accepisset injuriam; dum violatur effulsit.—*Sen. Ep.* 79.

[k] Rev. i. 5, 6; v. 13.

Dead and Buried.

SERMON XXVII.

1 Cor. xv. 3.—*For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures.*

St. Paul, meaning in this chapter to maintain a very fundamental point of our religion (*the resurrection of the dead*) against some infidels or heretics, who among the Corinthians, his scholars in the faith, did oppose it; doth, in order to the proof of his assertion, and refutation of that pernicious error, premise those doctrines, which he having received both from the relation of the other apostles, and by immediate revelation from God himself, had delivered unto them, ἐν πρώτοις, *in the first place*, or among the prime things; that is, as most eminent and important points of Christian doctrine: the truth whereof consequently (standing upon the same foundations with Christianity itself, upon divine revelation and apostolical testimony) could nowise be disputed of, or doubted, by any good Christian. Of which doctrines (the collection of which he styleth *the Gospel;* that Gospel, by embracing and retaining which they *were*, he saith, *to be saved*), the first is that in our text concerning the *death of our Lord*, undergone by him for our salvation: which point, as of all others in our religion it is of peculiar consequence, so it much concerneth us both firmly to believe it and well to understand it; for it is *by faith in his blood* that we are *justified*, and by *knowing Christ crucified* we shall be chiefly edified; *the*

word imparting this knowledge being *the power of God to salvation.*[a] It therefore I mean now, by God's assistance, to explain and apply; the which I shall do generally and absolutely; without any particular accommodation of my discourse to the words of this text; yet so as to comprehend all the particulars observable in them. The death of our Lord, then, is my subject, and about it I shall consider, 1. Its nature, or wherein it did consist. 2. Some peculiar adjuncts and respects thereof, which commend it to our regard, and render it considerable to us. 3. The principles and (impressive and meritorious) causes thereof. 4. The ends which it aimed at; together with the fruits and effects of it. 5. Some practical influences, which the consideration thereof may and should have upon us.

1. As for the nature of it, we must affirm, and believe assuredly, that it was a true and proper death; in kind not different from that death to the which all we mortal creatures are by the law and condition of our nature subject, and which we must all sometime undergo; for, *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death; that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?*[b] *that death*, which is signified by cessation from vital operations (of all motions natural or voluntary, of all sense and knowledge, appetite and passion;) *that death*, which is caused by violent disunion, or dislocation, by distempering, or however indisposing the parts, humours, spirits of the body, so that the soul can no longer in them and by them continue to exercise those functions, for which its conjunction thereto was intended, and cannot therefore fitly reside therein;* *that death*, which is supposed to consist in the dissolution of that vital band, whatever it be, whereby the soul is linked and united to the body; or in that which is thereupon consequent, the separation, department, and absence of the soul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home to their original principles, as it were; the body *to the earth from whence it was taken*, and *the spirit unto God who gave it.*[c] Such causes antecedent are specified in the story; such signs following are plainly implied, such a state is expressed, in the very terms whereby our death is commonly signified: the same extremity of anguish, the same dilaceration of parts, the same effusion of blood, which would destroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, stop our animal motions, exhaust our spirits, and force out our breath, did work upon him; necessarily producing the like effects on him, as who had assumed the common imperfections and infirmities of our nature; in regard to which violences inflicted upon him he is said, ἀποκτείνεσθαι, *to be killed or slain;* διαχειρίζεσθαι, *to be despatched;* ἀναιρεῖσθαι, *to be made away;* ἀπολέσθαι, *to perish*, or be destroyed; ἐξολοθρεύεσθαι, *to be cut off*, as it is said in Daniel; σφάττεσθαι, *to be slaughtered;* θύεσθαι, *to be sacrificed:*[d] which words do all of them fully import a real and proper death to have ensued upon those violent usages toward him.

And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to sense, the soldiers judged him dead; and therefore, ὡς εἶδον αὐτὸν ἤδη τεθνηκότα, *seeing him already dead, they forbear to break his legs:*[e] by the same all the world was satisfied thereof; both his spiteful enemies, that stood with delight, waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him; and his loving friends, who with compassionate respect attended upon him through the course of his suffering; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness, in procuring a decent interment of his body.[f]

His transition also, and abiding in this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death. St. Mark telleth us, that ἐξέπνευσε, *animam efflavit*, he expired, breathed out his soul, or his last breath; St. Matthew, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *animam egit*, he let go his spirit, or *gave up the ghost;*[g] St. John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he delivered up his spirit* into

* —— Ἐπεί κε πρῶτα λίπῃ μενεαν' ὀστέα θυμός·
Ψυχὴ δ', ἠΰτ' ὄνειρος, ἀποπταμένη πεπότηται.
Hom. Od. Λ. 220.

[a] Rom. iii. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 2; Rom. i. 16; Philip. iii. 10.

[b] Psal. lxxxix. 48.

[c] Gen. iii. 19; Eccles. xii. 7; Psal. civ. 29.

[d] Acts iii. 15; viii. 33; Dan. ix. 26; Isa. liii. 8; John xviii. 4; xi. 50; Rev. v. 9.

[e] John xix. 33.

[f] Mark xiv. 41; Luke xxiii. 27; John xix. 25.

[g] Mark xv. 37; Matt. xxvii. 50.

God's hand;[h] the which St. Luke expresseth done with a formal resignation: *Father* (said he) *into thy hands I commend* (or I depose) *my spirit;* he doth also himself frequently express his dying by *laying down his life*, and *bestowing it as a ransom*, which showeth him really to have parted with it.[i]

His death also (as ours is wont to be denoted by like phrases) is termed ἔξοδος, *excessus e vivis*, a going out of life, or from the society of men (for Moses and Elias are said *to tell*, τὴν ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ, *his decease*, *which he should accomplish at Jerusalem;*) and μετάβασις, a passing over, or translation from this into another world:[j] (*When*, saith St. John, *Jesus knew that his time was come*, ἵνα μεταβῇ, *that he should depart from this world.*[k]) His death also was enigmatically described by the *destruction* or demolishment *of his* bodily *temple*, answerable to those circumlocutions concerning our ordinary death; *the dissolution of our earthly house of tabernacle*, or transitory abode, in St. Paul; the ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματος, laying down, or putting off our tabernacle, in St. Peter.[l]

It were also not hard to show, how all other phrases and circumlocutions by which human death is expressed, either in holy scripture or in usual language, or among philosophers and more accurate speakers, are either expressly applied, or by consequence are plainly applicable to the death of our Saviour; such, for instance, as these in scripture: ἀνάγυσις, being resolved into our principles, or the returning of them thither whence they came;[m] ἀπόλυσις, a being freed, licensed, or dismissed hence; ἐκδημία ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, a going, or abode abroad; a peregrination, or absentment *from the body;*[n] an ἔκδυσις, putting off, or being divested of the body; and ἀφανισμὸς, disappearance, or cessation in appearance to be, a *going hence*, *and not being seen; a falling on sleep*, *resting from our labours*, *sleeping with our fathers*, being *added*, and *gathered to our fathers;* being *taken*, *or cut off out of the land of the living; going down into the pit: lying down*, *resting*, *sleeping in the dust; making our bed in darkness:*[o] these and the like phrases occurring in scripture (which might be paralleled out of vulgar speech, and out of learned discourses) describing either the entrance into, or the abiding in the state of that death, to which all men are obnoxious, might easily be showed applicable to the death of our Saviour. His resurrection doth imply the reality of his death; for otherwise it had not been miraculous, it had not been a pledge of our resurrection. But I will not further needlessly insist upon explicating, or confirming a point so clear, and never misunderstood, or questioned, except by some wild and presumptuous heretics.

Our Saviour's death, then, was a true, real, and proper death, suitable to that frail, passible, and mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undergo for us; to the condition of *sinful flesh*, *in the likeness whereof* he *did appear;*[p] severing his soul and body, and remitting them to their original sources: his passion was indeed *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme capital punishment, the highest, in the last result, which in this world either the fiercest injustice or the severest justice could inflict: for, *to kill the body* is, as our Lord himself taught, the utmost limit of all human power and malice;[q] the most and worst that man can do; they have not περισσότερόν τι, any thing beyond that, which they can attempt upon us: and so far did they proceed with our Lord. Such was the nature of his death; such indeed as was requisite for the accomplishment of the ends and effects designed thereby.

2. Let us now consider those peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death (together with his whole passion, whereof his death was the chief part and final completion), the which do commend it to our regard, and amplify the worth thereof: such are, 1. Its being a result of God's eternal resolution and decree. 2. Its

[h] John xix. 30.

[i] Luke xxiii. 46; Παρατίθεμαι, John xv. 13; x. 15, 18; xiii. 37; 1 John iii. 6.

[j] Luke ix 31; 2 Pet. i. 15; Ἄφιξις, Acts xx. 29. [k] John xiii. 1.

[l] John ii. 19; Matt. xxvi. 61; 2 Cor. v. 1; 2 Pet. i. 14.

[m] 1 Tim. iv. 6; Phil. i. 23; Luke ii. 29.

[n] 2 Cor. v. 8.

[o] Acts xiii. 36; Gen. xxv. 8; xlix. 33, &c.; Psal. xxxix. 13; lii. 5; xxviii. 1; cxliii. 7; lxxxviii. 4; Jer. xi. 19; Isa. xxxviii. 18; xxvi. 19; Ezek. xxvi. 20; Dan. xii 12; Job vii. 21; xvii. 16; xx. 11; xxi. 26; xvii. 13.

[p] Rom. viii. 3.

[q] Matt. x. 28; Luke xii. 4.

being a matter of free consent and compact between God the Father and his only Son. 3. Its being anciently prefigured and predicted. 4. Its being executed by God's hand and providence guiding and governing it; and by man's action concurring. 5. Its being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so high and excellent, of God's Son, of God the Son.

1. It was a result of God's eternal counsel and decree; it was no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised, or slipt from providence, but a well-laid design, from all eternity contrived by divine wisdom, resolved upon by divine goodness. As God did (by the incomprehensible perfection of his nature) from thence foresee our lapse and misery, so he did as soon determine our remedy and means of salvation. As the whole of that mysterious dispensation concerning Christ, so especially did this main part thereof proceed κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων, *according to an eternal purpose*, as St. Paul speaketh; for our Saviour was *a Lamb slain* (in designation irrevocably slain) *from the foundation of the world*; as it is said in the Revelation:[r] and, *We* (saith St. Peter) *were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*, προεγνωσμένου μὲν, *foreordained indeed before the foundation of the world*:[s] and our Saviour *went*, as he telleth us himself, to suffer, κατὰ τὸ ὡρισμένον, *according to what was determined*: and, *It was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God* (saith St. Peter) *that he was delivered up into those wicked hands* that slew him;[t] nor did the conspiracy of *Herod and Pilate, with the nation and people of the Jews*, effect any thing about it beyond ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ, καὶ ἡ βουλὴ Θεοῦ προώρισε γενέσθαι, *whatever the hand and counsel of God* (or God's effectual purpose) *had predetermined to come to pass*.[u] Such an especial care and providence of God, concerning this matter, so expressly and so frequently recommended to our observation, do argue the very great moment and high worth thereof. What God declareth himself to have had so early and earnest a care of, must be matter of highest consideration and importance.

2. It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and his Son. God did freely and graciously (out of merciful regard to our welfare) proffer, that if he would please to undertake to redeem his (lost and enslaved) creature, an honourable and comfortable success to his enterprise; that he would accept his performances, and that the design should prosper in his hand: he did willingly embrace the proposal, and applied himself to the performance: *When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, thou shalt see thy seed, and prolong thy days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand: thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul, and shalt be satisfied*;[v] that, in the prophet's language, was God's proposition: and, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*;[w] that was our Saviour's reply, in correspondence and consent thereto. God, in consideration of what our Lord would obediently suffer, did, as our Saviour telleth us, διατίθεσθαι βασιλειαν, *covenant to him a kingdom*;[x] committing a sovereign authority, assigning an universal dominion to him; in virtue of which transaction it was that *Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour*;[y] that *because he poured out his soul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great*;[z] that *he being obedient to the death, God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names*.[a] In this regard are God's elect and faithful people said to be given unto him, as a retribution to him *who gave himself for them*; (*Thine they were*, saith our Lord to his Father, *and thou gavest them me*;) hence are we said to be *bought with a price*; hence is *the church purchased by his blood*;[b] there was therefore a covenant and bargain driven between God and his son concerning this affair; and of huge consideration surely must that affair be, wherein such persons do so deeply interest themselves, trafficking, and, as it were, standing upon terms with one another.[c]

[r] Ephes. iii. 11; Rev. xiii. 8.
[s] 1 Pet. i. 19.
[t] Luke xxii. 22; Acts ii. 23.
[u] Acts iv. 28.

[v] Isa. liii. 9, 10.
[w] Heb. x. 7, 8.
[x] Luke xxii. 29.
[y] Heb. ii. 9.
[z] Isa. liii. 12.
[a] Phil. ii. 8, 9; Rom xiv. 9.
[b] John xvii. 6.
[c] Gal. iii. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Pet. i. 19; Acts. xx. 28.

3. That the great excellency and efficacy of our Saviour's death and passion might appear, it was by manifold types foreshadowed; and in divers prophecies foretold. Indeed most of the famous passages of providence (especially the signal afflictions of eminent persons representing our Saviour) do seem to have been prefigurations of, or preludes to, his passion. The blood of the righteous protomartyr Abel, shed by an envious brother, for acceptable obedience performed by him to God's will, and *crying to heaven*, might prefigure that blood, which cried also, although with another voice, *speaking better things than the blood of Abel;*[d] not sad complaints, and suits for vengeance, but sweet entreaties and intercessions for mercy. Isaac, the only son, *the son of promise*, his oblation in purpose, or *death in parable*,[e] as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, did plainly represent our Saviour, the promised seed, his being really offered, and afterward miraculously restored to life. Joseph's being sold, and put into slavery by his envious brethren, being slanderously accused, and shut in prison (*whose feet they hurt with fetters; the iron entered into his soul;*[f]) and this by God's disposal in order to his exaltation; and that he might be a means of preserving life, and preparing a convenient habitation for the children of Israel, doth well resemble him, who *by suffering entered into his glory;* who *thereby being perfected, became author of salvation to his brethren*, all *true Israelites;*[g] who *went to prepare mansions* of rest and light, a heavenly Goshen for them. David's persecutions foregoing his royal dignity and prosperous state; which he expresseth in such strains as these: *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; the sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death prevented me;*[h] how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Lord's afflictions, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to consider; as also the rest of such passages, having a mysterious importance accommodable to this purpose. However, all the sacrifices of old, instituted by God, we may with fuller confidence affirm to have been chiefly preparatory unto and prefigurative of this most true and perfect sacrifice; by virtue whereof indeed those ὑποδείγματα, and σκιαί, umbratic representations (or insinuations) did obtain their substance, validity, and effect:[i] if they did not signify this in design, they could signify nothing in effect; for as *without shedding of blood there was no remission*[j] (God's anger would not be appeased, nor his justice satisfied without it; it being *blood, which*, according to God's prescription, did *make atonement for the soul,*[k]) as the appointment of those sacrifices did speak and signify; so *it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin;* that those *legal gifts and sacrifices should perfect the conscience of him that did the service;*[l] that is, should entirely assure him of pardon and impunity, or raise in him a strong and clear hope of God's favour: the lives of beasts were not in value answerable, nor could fitly be subrogated instead of men's souls, which had offended, and thence were liable to death; the effusion of their blood could not reasonably satisfy a man's conscience, sensible of guilt and fearful of God's displeasure, that by it God was fully appeased; they must therefore refer unto a κρείττων θυσία, *a more excellent sacrifice;*[m] one more sufficient in itself, and more acceptable to God; in virtue of which, and in regard thereto, sin might be thoroughly expiated, God's wrath might be propitiated, divine vengeance might be removed, the mind of man therefore might be comforted and contented. The high priest's entrance once a year into the holy of holies, *not without blood to atone for his own and the people's ignorances*[n] (or miscarriages), did imply, that our *great High Priest* should make one bloody atonement for the offences of mankind, and, passing through the veil of mortal flesh, should enter into the true *sanctum sanctorum* of heaven, there to *appear in the presence of God for us;* exhibiting the virtue of his meritorious

[d] Gen. iv. 10; Luke xi. 51; Heb. xii. 24; xi. 4.
[e] Heb. xi. 7, 19.
[f] Psal. cv. 18.
[g] Gen. xlv. 5; Luke xxiv. 26; Heb. v. 9; John xiv. 2.
[h] Psal. xviii. 4.
[i] Heb. ix. 23; viii. 5.
[j] Heb. ix. 22.
[k] Levit. xii. 11.
[l] Heb. x. 4; ix. 9, 15; x. 11.
[m] Heb. ix. 23.
[n] Heb. ix. 7, 10, 24.

passion, together with his effectual intercession for mercy toward us. Especially the paschal lamb, in its substance (as a lamb, meek and gentle), in its quality (as without blemish and spot, pure and innocent), in its manner of preparation and dressing (being killed by all the assembly, having its blood sprinkled upon the doors of every house, being roasted with fire, having bitter herbs for its sauce), with other observable circumstances about it, was a most apposite emblem of *Christ our passover:*[v] who not only by his death did signify, and mind us of, but did really achieve our deliverance from the mystical Egypt, our state of spiritual bondage. So did ancient types exhibit and represent; plain predictions also did express the same death and suffering of our Lord: *Those things* (saith St. Peter) *which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled;*[p] not one prophet only, not some few; but *all* saith he (that is, either plainly or covertly, either directly or by consequence), *have foreshowed* (or foretold) it: it is our negligence, or stupidity, if we do not discern it in them; as our Lord intimated, when he thus spake to his disciples: *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ* (ought he not, according to their presignifications and predictions) *to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?*[q] That David, an illustrious representative of the Messias, doth often describe as belonging to himself, mortal agonies and sufferings, not well applicable κατὰ λέξιν, or in direct historical meaning, to his own person, and therefore in reason, according to a more high and perfect sense, to be understood of the Messias himself;[r] that Daniel plainly foretelleth, that in a certain time the Messias *should be cut off;* that Isaiah doth in several places insinuate, and in the famous 53rd chapter of his prophecy doth clearly describe, the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that even those of the Jewish doctors who have been most earnest opposers of our Lord, have been forced to acknowledge that there is to be as well one Messias to suffer, as another to prosper, and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend, or so perverse as not to acknowledge, the consistency between antecedent suffering and consequent glory; between a night of *darkness* and sorrow, and a day of night and joy breaking out from it; not being able or willing to distinguish between an external pomp in this world, and an external majesty in the future state.[w] But unto us God's so forward care, *by the spirit of Christ in his prophets,* προμαρτύρεσθαι *to forewitness* (as St. Peter speaketh, or to testify beforehand) *the sufferings of our Saviour, and the glories succeeding,*[x] doth imply, with what diligence of attention we should regard, with what firmness of faith we should embrace, with what satisfaction of heart we should entertain, this great and admirable dispensation.

4. We may consider, that this death was compassed by God's especial providence directing and disposing it, although not without the active concurrence of men: the treacherous disposition and covetous appetite of Judas; the envious humour and blind zeal of the scribes and priests; the wanton fickleness and wild rudeness of the people; the fearful and selfish temper of the governor, were but instruments whereby God's *own hand* did inflict this sore chastisement upon his Son for us:[y] it was *the Lord* that *laid upon him the iniquities of us all; by God he was stricken, smitten, and afflicted:*[z] *Pilate* (it is said) *had no power* to do what he did, *but what was given him from above;*[a] the Jews with their rulers proceeded rashly and ignorantly; otherwise, as St. Paul affirmeth, *they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;* but God advisedly, as St. Peter told them, *did accomplish it; He did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us:*[b] he, as it were, suspended his bowels of pity toward him, he withdrew his face of kindness from him, out of compassion and benignity toward us; he used him severely, that he might deal favourably with us.

[v] 1 Cor. v. 7.
[p] Acts iii. 18, Προκατήγγειλε.
[q] Luke xxiv. 25, 26; xviii. 31; Acts xiii. 27; xxvi. 22.
[r] Psal. xxii. cix, &c.
[w] Luke xxii. 53.
[x] 1 Pet. i. 11.
[y] Acts iv. 28.
[z] Isa. liii. 6, 4.
[a] John xix. 11.
[b] 1 Cor. ii. 8; Acts iii. 17; xiii. 27; Rom. viii. 32.

Yet did man actively concur therein: all mankind in a sort, by its representatives, was involved, as principally in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by which he suffered; there was a general conspiracy of Jew and Gentile practised against the life of their common Saviour: *Of a truth* (saith St. Peter) *against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and with the people of Israel:*[c] in the Jews the horrid ingratitude of men, in the Gentiles their wretched infirmity, did appear; the which, by their active efficacy toward our Lord's death, did signify the meritorious influence they also had upon it; that it was our iniquity and corruption which did cause it: so as a work of divine Providence (the most admirable work ever accomplished by Providence), as an act of human pravity (the most heinous act ever committed by men), is the death of our Lord considerable.

5. But more immediately the quality and condition of our Saviour's person do most commend to us, and advance the worth of his death: if, as the Psalmist saith, *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;* if the spotless candour and unblemished integrity of a lamb do make its *blood precious*, and qualify it for an acceptable sacrifice; how valuable to God shall be the death of a person so perfectly holy and innocent; who did not so much as *know sin; in whose mouth no guile was ever found;* who was *holy, harmless, undefiled, removed* (at infinite distance removed) *from sinners;*[d] who *needed not to offer sacrifices for his own sins;* whose death therefore for others was apt to be more available and acceptable! Again, if the life of a king be (as king David's people told him) *worth ten thousand lives;*[e] if it be a most enormous crime and highest treason to imagine his death; how valuable must be the death of a person so incomparably transcendent in dignity, *of the Lord of glory, of the Prince of life! Ye denied the holy and the just one: ye slew the Prince of life: They crucified the Lord of glory:*[f] so the apostles do aggravate the business. But a further height, a perfect immensity indeed, of worth and efficacy, must needs accrue to the death of our Saviour, from his being the Son of God; from his being God (one and the same in nature with his almighty and all-glorious Father:) for it is *the blood of Christ, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all sin;*[g] yea, *God* himself *did* (as St. Paul saith in the Acts) *purchase the church with his own blood;* it is *the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity:*[h] and, *Hereby* (saith St. John) *perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.*[i] That the immortal God should die, that the Most High should be debased to so low a condition, as it cannot be heard without wonder, so it could not be undertaken without huge reason, nor accomplished without mighty effect: well indeed might such a condescension serve to advance us from the basest state to any pitch of honour and happiness; well might one drop of that royal blood of heaven suffice to purchase many worlds, to ransom innumerable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of sins, however grievous and foul. But so much for the peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death.

3. Let us now consider the causes and principles whence it proceeded; which moved God to determine it, and our Lord to undertake it; they were in both acts most voluntary and free: of the Father it is said, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him;* and, *Behold* (saith our Lord in the Psalm), *I come to do thy will, O God;*[j] that is, as the Apostle to the Hebrews expoundeth it, to offer, not the blood of beasts in sacrifice, but my own body, according to thy will and appointment: and, *This commandment* (saith he in St. John) *I received of my Father, to lay down my life;*[k] and, *The cup* (saith he again) *which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*[l] So on the Father's part, and on our Saviour's likewise, it was no less vol-

[c] Acts iv. 27.
[d] Psal. cxvi. 15; lxxii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 19; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 22; 1 John iii. 5; Isa. liii. 9; Heb. vii. 26, 27.
[e] 2 Sam. xviii. 3; xxi. 17.
[f] Acts iii. 15; 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[g] 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5, 6.
[h] Acts xx. 28; Tit. ii. 14.
[i] 1 John iii. 16.
[j] Isa. liii. 10; Psal. xl. 7, 9; Heb. x. 7.
[k] John x. 18.
[l] John xviii. 11.

untary; for, *None* (saith he) *taketh my life from me* (that is, it is not from any necessity or compulsion that I do part with it), *but I lay it down of myself*,[m] (with absolute choice and freedom;) *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to resume it:* and, *The bread* (saith he) *which I shall give, is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world; The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many.*[n] The yielding his flesh to death, the paying his life a ransom, were deeds of gift perfectly free: and that both in regard to God the Father and the Son this performance was voluntary, St. Paul together thus expresseth: *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*[o] so this death issued from the joint wills of God and his Son. But as the volitions of every intelligent and wise agent do always proceed from some principle inclining, or are directed according to some impulsive cause moving to them, so divers principles and causes of these voluntary acts are declared in scripture; the chief of which are reducible to these two: one internally disposing God's goodness; the other externally inviting man's distress. The case stood thus: mankind lying in a sad and forlorn estate, oppressed by Satan, enslaved to sin, subject to a rigorous law, exposed to the severity of justice, tormented by the sense of guilt, fearful of divine wrath and due vengeance; in short, by the sentence of heaven and by the suffrage of conscience within, condemned to punishment unavoidable, and to intolerable misery; man, I say, lying in so desperately uncomfortable a condition, God's infinite goodness regarded his poor creature, his *bowels of campassion*[p] yearned toward him, a desire of relieving sprang up in his will; thence was he moved to provide such a remedy, suitable and sufficient for his delivery; for the removing all those mischiefs, and curing all those distempers: the main source of all this wonderful performance (as of all other providential dispensations and works, *ad extra*), was that most excellent perfection of God, which, in regard to this matter, is sometimes termed χρηστότης, benignity, or bounty; implying the great benefit and advantage we do thence receive; sometimes grace, or favour, signifying the pure freeness in dispensing it, without any design of profit to himself, or any desert on our part (*By the grace of God he tasted death for every man;*) sometimes mercy, denoting our bad deserts, or obnoxiousness to justice and punishment; sometimes pity, signifying the great need we had thereof, by reason of our extreme distress and misery.[q] Commonly also it is, by the most obliging and endearing name styled love, and philanthropy, intimating the earnest regard and benevolence God had to us as his creatures, and as capable of being benefited and bettered by him: *Herein* (saith St. Paul) *God commended his love toward us, in that we being yet sinners, Christ died for us;* and, *God* (saith St. John) *loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for us;* and, *God* (saith our Lord himself) *so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son—that the world might be saved by him.*[r]

By the way it is worth observing, that there is distinguishable a threefold love of God toward men, intimated in scripture: 1. A general love to mankind, antecedent to the sending our Lord, and his performances, being the ground of God's designing them; which may be called a love of pity, or mercy toward poor man lying under condemnation and distress; this is that φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ, *philanthropy of God our Saviour, which appeared in saving us* (that is, in granting us the capacity and means of salvation), *not by works of righteousness which we had done, but by his mercy;* the *love* which *he commended, in that while we were sinners Christ died for us.*[s] 2. A love, immediately consequent upon our Lord's performances and sufferings, and procured by them; whereby God is so far pleased with men, and reconciled to the world, that he *desireth all men's*

[m] John x. 18.
[n] John vi. 51; Matt. xxi. 28; Gal. ii. 20, &c.; Tit. ii. 14.
[o] Gal. i. 4.
[p] Διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους, Luke i. 78
[q] Tit. iii. 4; Rom. ii. 4; Eph. ii. 7; Heb. ii. 9; Rom. iii. 24; 2 Cor. viii. 9; Eph. ii. 8, 5; i. 7; Tit. iii. 5; Luke i. 78; Eph. ii. 4; Heb. ii. 17.
[r] 1 Tim. ii. 6; Tit. iii. 4; Rom. v. 8; Eph. ii. 4; 1 John iv. 9, 10; John iii. 16, 17.
[s] Tit. iii. 4; Rom. v. 8.

salvation, and offereth to them terms and means thereof;[t] in regard to which our Lord is said to be the Saviour of the world, and Redeemer of all men; of which love St. Paul speaketh, when he saith, that *being enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;* and that *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins;* and, that *God having made peace by the blood of his cross, did reconcile by him all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven;* the which may be called a love of reconciliation and favour; or the *grace* of God, which *came by Jesus Christ.*[u]

3. A peculiar love of friendship and complacence, which God beareth toward all those who do sincerely turn and steadfastly adhere to him, repenting of their sins and embracing the gospel, and persisting in obedience to his laws; such God is every where represented to affect with tenderest love, as his faithful servants, his good friends, and dear children; being *especially the Saviour of them:*[v] this distinction is observable for our better understanding the passages of scripture concerning this matter; in which God is sometimes represented as bearing a general love to all men, sometimes as more especially loving the faithful and good men.

The like principles and impulsive causes are said to move our Lord to undertake and undergo death for us; it was goodness and love toward us that inclined him thereto: *Christ* (saith St. Paul) *loved us, and delivered up himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God: He loved the church, and delivered up himself for it. He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood: Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: I live* (saith St. Paul again) *by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*[w]

Such were the principles disposing, and causes in a sort moving to which we may add our sins, as the meritorious causes of our Saviour's death: *He died for our sins; He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.* He died for us, not only as for men, not only as for wretched men, but as for unjust and sinful men; as for enemies, and strangers to God; such as had greivously displeased God, had incurred heinous guilt, had deserved, and were become obnoxious to severest punishment; so standing in need of reconcilement, propitiation, and redemption.[x] Had we been innocent and guiltless, there had wanted sufficient cause, or just reason for his death; God would not have been angry, justice could have had no pretence, or hold; we should not have been liable to suffer ourselves, nor could he have suffered for us. Death is the debt, or *wages due to sin;* which he therefore paid, because we owed it, and could not discharge it:[y] *All we* (as it is said in the prophet) *have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord* (therefore) *hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:*[z] our sins were not only indirect or remote occasions of his death, but did procure it in way of desert: even as they would have been meritorious causes of our death, had he not undertaken for us, so were they the like causes of his death, who died for us, and in our stead; who *was made sin* (that is, a sinner, or a sacrifice) *for us;* who *gave himself* ἀντίλυτρον, *a ransom instead of us all;* paying his blood a price for us, and redeeming us thereby from all the penalties and inconveniences we were liable to; *buying us from the curse, by becoming a curse for us;* who *had upon him the chastisement of our peace;* and *did offer up his soul an offering and sacrifice for our sins;* thereby *expiating them*, propitiating God's wrath, and reconciling God unto us, *purging us* from guilt, and procuring entire remission for our sins; the which considerations do sufficiently argue our sins, in way of desert, to have been the causes of his death.[a]

[t] 1 Tim. ii. 4; Tit. ii. 11.

[u] 1 Tim. ii. 6; iv. 10; Rom. v. 10; 2 Cor. v. 19; Col. i. 20; John i. 17; Acts x. 33; Rom. xi. 32; Luke ii. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 4.

[v] 1 Tim. iv. 10.

[w] Eph. v. 2, 25; Rev. i. 5; 1 John iii. 16; (John xv. 13;) Gal. ii. 20.

[x] 1 Cor. xv. 3; Heb. x. 12; Isa. liii. 5, 6; 2 Cor. v. 15; Rom. v. 6, 8, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 18.

[y] Rom. vi. 23.

[z] Isa. liii. 6, 4, 11.

[a] 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Matt. xx. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23; Heb. ix. 12; Gal. iii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 18; Rom. iii. 24; 2 Pet. ii. 1; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Isa. liii. 5, 10; Heb. x. 12; 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10; Rom. iii. 25; Heb.

Now for the ends which our Lord's death aimeth at, and the effects which it produceth (these we join, because in reality they are the same), they, in scripture reckoning and expression, are various and many: the most general are these, comprehending divers others subordinate to them:

1. The illustration of God's glory, by demonstrating and displaying therein his most excellent attributes and perfections; so doth St. Paul teach us: *Whom God* (saith he) *hath set forth a propitiation by faith in his blood*, εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, *for a demonstration of his righteousness;*[b] that is, as I take it, of his goodness, his justice, his fidelity, his constancy, of all those commendable perfections, which are expressed in dealing with others;[c] and our Lord, his passion being instantly to follow, made this reflection: *Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him;* and, *I have glorified thee upon earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*[d] God did therein show himself most highly good and gracious, in so providing for the welfare of those who deserved nothing of him, who deserved ill of him, who had offended and injured him very heinously: he manifested himself most strictly just, in not suffering iniquity to go unpunished, but rather than so, exposing his own dear Son to punishment, and in him choosing himself to suffer; he declared his wisdom in contriving so admirable an expedient, whereby both his goodness might be exercised, and his justice not infringed; he showed his veracity, fidelity, and constancy, in executing by his providence what he before had designed and promised, although so grievous and bitter to the Son of his love: he therein also laid a ground of declaring his almighty power, in raising him from the dead, as likewise of his goodness and justice in exalting him: thus by our Saviour's death was the divine glory much illustrated, and our good consequently promoted; for that we therein contemplating him so amiable for goodness, so terrible for justice, so venerable for all excellency, may be induced thence to love him, to dread him, to worship and reverence him, as it becometh us, and as it is necessary for us in order to our happiness.

2. The dignifying and exaltation of our Lord himself; by acquiring unto him in a manner a new right unto, and instating him in an universal dominion, in a transcendent glory, in perfect joy accruing to him by remuneration for so excellent an instance of submission and obedience to God's will. This is that which our Lord foresaw and foretold: *If God was glorified in him, then will God glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him:* and, *To this end* (saith St. Paul) *Christ died, that he might be the Lord of the dead and living:* and, *For the suffering of death he was crowned with glory and honour*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews: and, *He was obedient to the death, therefore God exalted him:* and, *The Prince of our salvation was perfect by suffering:* and, *For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross;* and, *He* (said the prophet of him) *shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied:* and, *Worthy* (say the heavenly host in the Apocalypse) *is the Lamb that is slain* (*worthy* is he, *for that he was slain, and did redeem us to God by his blood*), *to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*[e]

3. The salvation of mankind; the which he was designed to procure by his death, and in many respects he did promote it thereby.

He did it by appeasing that wrath of God which he naturally beareth toward iniquity, and reconciling God to men, who by sin were alienated from him; by procuring a favourable disposition and intentions of grace toward us. *While we were sinners*, saith St. Paul, *Christ died for us*, (and sinners, or wicked men, God cannot like or endure: *Thou art not* (saith the Psalmist) *a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity:* and, *The wicked, and*

ii. 17; Rom. v. 10, 11; 2 Cor. v. 19; Eph. ii. 16; i. 7; Heb. ix. 14, 23, 26; John iii. 36; Matt. xxvi. 28; Col. i. 14; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5.

[b] Rom. iii. 5; Col. i. 27; Eph. ii. 7.

[c] (John xxi. 20.)

[d] John xiii. 31; xvii. 4.

[e] John xiii. 32; xvii. 5; Rom. xiv. 9; Heb. ii. 9; Phil. ii. 8, 9; Heb. ii. 10; xii. 2; Isa. liii. 11; Rev. v. 12, 9; (Tit. ii. 14.)

him that loveth violence, his soul hateth:[f] yet for us, being such, Christ died, removing thereby that just hatred and displeasure; as St. Paul presently after expresseth and expoundeth it: *When* (saith he) *we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son:*) and otherwhere, *God* (saith he) *was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;*[g] the non-imputation of our sins is expressed as a singular effect, an instance, an argument of his being in mind reconciled and favourably disposed toward us: and again, *He died to reconcile both* (Jews and Gentiles) *unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;*[h] that is, God being thereby reconciled to all people, they became thence united together in the common relation of friends and fellow servants to God; becoming, as it there follows, *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God* (or allied unto him by spiritual relations.[i])

Again, it furthered our salvation, by purchasing the remission of our sins, and justification of our persons; our freedom from condemnation and punishment, our appearance as upright, and acceptable in God's sight; upon the conditions of faith and repentance propounded in the gospel; in regard to which effects he is said thereby to redeem us from our sins, to bear them, to take them away, to expiate them, to cleanse, to purge, to sanctify us from them: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who shall condemn them? It is Christ that died;*[j] that is, Christ's death hath freed them from all liableness to guilt and condemnation. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;*[k] that is, he by undergoing an accursed kind of death, hath purchased an indemnity and impunity for the transgressors of God's law: and, *Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath;*[l] that is, from the effects of God's just displeasure, condemnation and punishment: and, *In whom* (saith St. Paul again clearly) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace:* and, *My blood* (saith our Lord) *is the blood of the new testament, which was shed for many for the remission of sins:* and, *Christ* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *was once offered to bear the sin of many* (or of the many, the multitude of men.) *Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared,* εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, *for the abolition of sin by the sacrifice of himself:* and, *Behold* (said St. John the Baptist) *the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world:* and, *The blood of Christ doth* (saith St. John) *cleanse us from all sin: He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood: He is a propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world:* and, *Jesus, that by his blood he might sanctify the people, did suffer out of the gate: He delivered himself up for the church, that he might sanctify it—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*[m]

Our Lord also by his death procured our salvation, as having thereby purchased for us means sufficient to free us from the power and dominion of sin, to purify our hearts, and sanctify our lives: for, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:* and, *He gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world:* and, *We were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver, or with gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, from our vain conversation, delivered from our fathers:* and, *he by his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness: We are with him dead to sin; our old man as crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*[n]

[f] Rom. v. 8, 10; Psal. v. 4; xi. 5; xxxiv. 16; Hab. i. 3; Isa. iii. 8.
[g] 2 Cor. v. 19.
[h] Eph. ii. 16; Col. i. 20, 21, &c.
[i] Ephes. ii. 19, Οἰκεῖοι τοῦ Θεοῦ.
[j] Rom. viii. 34.
[k] Gal. iii. 13; (1 Pet. ii. 24.)
[l] Rom. v. 8.
[m] Ephes. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Matt. xxvi. 28; Heb. ix. 27, 26, 28; vii. 27; John i. 29; (Heb. x. 4, 11;) 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5; 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10; Heb. xiii. 12; Eph. v. 25, 27.
[n] Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; ii. 24; Rom. vi. 2, 6, 8, 11.

In subordination to, coincidence or concurrence with, the principal designs and effects, our Lord also died for the reparation of God's honour, which we by contempt of his authority and violation of his law had impaired, but our Saviour by so signal an obedience thereto did repair; for the recovery of God's right, which was infringed by withdrawing so great and noble a part of his creation from its due allegiance and service; the which he recovered and restored to him; for the satisfaction of God's justice, provoked by so heinous impieties and iniquities; the which was abundantly performed by so infinitely valuable a compensation and sacrifice offered thereto.

Also for ratification of the new covenant between God and us; whence his blood is called, *the blood of the covenant, the blood of the new testament.*[o]

For the pacifying and reconciling all things in heaven and earth; removing all causes of dissension and distance; inducing obligations to concord and charity.

For pulling out *the sting*, and removing the terrors *of death; destroying* (or defeating) *him that had the power of death, and delivering them who through the fear of death are all their lifetime subject to death.*[p]

For the suppressing, vanquishing, and *triumphing over the powers of hell* and darkness, the which he did, as St. Paul telleth us, achieve *upon his cross:* and by his death he telleth us, that the *prince of this world* was *condemned* and *cast out.*[q]

For engaging us to the practice of all righteousness and obedience (especially to the most excellent, high, and hard parts thereof, charity, humility, meekness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and perseverance), both from our obligation in regard to what he suffered for us, and in imitation of his example; for, *We should run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame:* and, *Christ having suffered for us in the flesh, we should* (saith St. Peter) *arm ourselves with the same mind,—so as no longer to live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God.*[r]

Lastly, for attestation unto and confirmation of divine truth; sealing by his blood that heavenly doctrine which he taught, and *witnessing before Pontius Pilate a good confession:* he was the Prince of martyrs; who, as *he for this end*, as he told Pilate, *was born, and for this end came into the world, that he might bear witness to the truth*, so he especially did accomplish that glorious design by his death; *enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself, resisting unto blood in combating against sin;* by *his blood*, indeed, all other witnesses of truth did, as it is said in the Revelation, accomplish their warfare, and *obtain victory:*[s] his blood purchased for them their resolution and strength; his promises supported them, his example did animate them, to the profession and maintenance of truth, in the greatest dangers and most violent assaults.

Such ends did the death of our Lord regard, such fruits did grow from it which the time permitteth us but thus cursorily to touch.

5. Now for the practical influences the consideration of this point should have upon us, they are many and great; but we now can only name or insinuate them.

1. It should beget in us highest degrees of love and gratitude toward God and toward our Saviour, in regard to this highest expression of love and instance of beneficence toward us. Greater love God could not have showed, than in thus destinating and offering up his only dearest Son to death (a most painful and shameful death) for our sake; and, *Greater love* (he told us himself) *hath no man than this, that one should lay down his life for his friends;*[t] no man hath greater, except himself, who even laid his life down for his enemies and persecutors: and love so incomparably, so extremely great, doth surely require correspondent degrees of love and thankfulness.

2. It should raise in us great faith and

[o] Heb. x. 29; Matt. xxvi. 28; 1 Cor. xi. 25; Col. i. 20; Eph. ii. 25.
[p] 1 Cor. xv. 55; Heb. ii. 14, 15, Καταργήσας.
[q] Col. ii. 15; John xii. 31; xvi. 11.
[r] Heb. xii. 1, 2; 1 Pet. iv. 1, 12.
[s] 1 Tim. vi. 13; John xviii. 37; Heb. xii. 3, 4; Rev. xii. 11.
[t] John xv. 13.

hope in God, excluding all distrust and despair that God will not bestow upon us whatever is needfully or conveniently good for us; for, *He* (as St. Paul argueth) *who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*[a]

3. Particularly, it should comfort us, and satisfy our conscience in regard to the guilt of our sins, however contracted, supposing that we do heartily repent of them; for that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit;* and, that *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;*[v] by virtue of his death we sincerely repenting are freed from all condemnation, we truly believing have a firm and sure peace with God: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth,* seeing *it is Christ that hath died?*[w] We are very blameably incredulous if, having such an assurance from God, and such an engagement upon him, we distrust his mercy.

4. It discovereth unto us the heinousness of our sins, and thence should breed in us a vehement detestation, together with a great dread of them; a detestation of them, as having provoked God to such a pitch of displeasure, causing him to deal thus severely with his own beloved Son; as having brought so heavy suffering upon a Person so infinitely high in dignity, excellent in worth, kind and gracious to us; a dread of them, as exposing us, if we do not avoid and forsake them, to the most grievous pains and miseries; for, *if these things were done to a green tree* (if such punishments were inflicted upon one so innocent, so worthy, so little obnoxious to the fire of divine wrath and vengeance), *what shall be done to the dry?*[x] that is, what will become of us, who are so guilty, so combustible by that fire, if we by presumptuous commission of sin, and impenitent continuance therein, do incense God against us?

5. It should work in us a kindly contrition and remorse for our sins, which were indeed the murderers of so good a friend and loving a Saviour: others were but instruments; they were the principal authors of his death; they most truly betrayed him, they accused him, they condemned him, they lifted him up to the accursed tree; they moved God, and enabled men to inflict this horrible punishment on him.

6. It should deter us from them, and engage us most carefully to avoid them, as those which in a sort do exact another death from him; *crucifying him afresh* (as the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us) *vilifying and defiling the precious blood of the covenant* (as he likewise teacheth.[y])

7. It should engage us to a patient submission and resignation of ourselves to the will and providence of God; *forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, we should* (as St. Peter adviseth) *arm ourselves likewise with the same mind:* and, *Let* (exhorteth St. Paul) *the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross:* we should not disdain, nor upon any account be displeased or unwilling in bearing any cross or affliction, to follow the pattern of our great Master; *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross.*[z]

8. It doth also oblige us to the deepest mortification in conformity to his death: we should be *with him* (or after him) *crucified* to the lusts and affections of the flesh, to the fashions, glories, desires, and delights of the world; *knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*[a]

9. It is also a strong engagement to the fullest measure of charity toward our brethren; for, *If* (saith St. John) *God so loved us* (as to give his own Son to die for us), *then ought we to love one another,* in a degree answerable to such an obligation and pattern: *If* (addeth the same apostle) *he laid down his life for us, then ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren.*[b]

[a] Rom. v. 10.
[v] Rom. viii. 1; v. 1.
[w] Rom. viii. 34.
[x] Luke xxiii. 31.
[y] Heb. vi. 9; x. 29.
[z] Heb. xii. 1.
[a] Phil. iii. 20; Gal. v. 24; ii. 20; 1 Pet. iv. 2; Col. iii. 3, 5; Rom. vi. 5, 6.
[b] 1 John iv. 11; iii. 16.

10. In fine, we hence appear obliged to yield up ourselves wholly to the service of our Saviour; to the promoting of his interest and glory: since *we* (as St. Paul admonisheth us) *are not our own, being bought with a price;* and must *therefore glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's*, by a purchase so dear and precious; since, as that apostle again mindeth us, *Christ died for all, that they which live might not live to themselves, but to him that died for them;* this being, let us not wrong *the Lord who bought us*, by withholding his due, the price of his dearest blood;[c] let us not abuse him, by defeating his purpose, no less advantageous to ourselves, than honourable to him; but as by being our Saviour he hath deserved to be our Lord, so in effect let him ever be; let us ever believe him so in our heart, confess him with our mouth, and avow him in our practice; which that may we do, God of his infinite mercy, by his holy grace, vouchsafe unto us, through *Jesus Christ our Lord.* Amen.

Now, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from ous sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.[d]

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.[e]

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.[f] Amen.

He descended into Hell.

SERMON XXVIII.

ACTS ii. 27.—*Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.*

ST. PETER in his sermon to the Jews cites these words of the Psalmist to prove the resurrection of Christ. And because upon these words our Saviour's *descent into hell* seems to be grounded, I shall from this text take occasion to discourse of this article of the Creed, *Κατελθόντα εἰς ᾅδου, He descended into hell.*

This article is of later standing in the Creed, and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones public or private; excepting that of Aquileia; into which also perhaps it might have been inserted not long before Ruffinus's time; and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the Fathers, and afterwards among the Schoolmen, and lately among modern divines) been much debated, having yielded occasion to many prolix and elaborate discourses: to recite the several opinions about it, or different explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater time and pains than I can well afford; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than I could hope to achieve.—Wherefore (both upon these accounts, and because I rather choose to insist upon matters more clear in their nature, and more practical in consequence) I should be willing altogether to waive this obscure and perplexed subject; yet however somewhat to comply with expectation, I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming conducible to the clearing, or to the ending of the controversies about it.

Now, whereas there may be a threefold inquiry; one, concerning the meaning of these words (*he descended into hell*) intended by those who inserted them; another, concerning the most proper signification of the words themselves; a third, concerning the meaning they are in consistency with truth capable of;

1. The first I resolve, or rather remove, by saying, it seems needless to dispute what meaning they who placed the words here did intend; since, 1. It is possible, and by many like instances might be declared so, and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others, this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof; as we believe all the scriptures, and commend them to the faith of others, without understanding the sense of many passages

[c] 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23; 2 Cor. v. 15; 2 Pet. ii. 1.
[d] Rev. i. 5.
[e] Rev. v. 12.
[f] Rev. v. 13.

therein: and since, 2. Perhaps they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then passable among divers, but not built upon any sure foundation (like that of the millennium; and the necessity of infants communicating, &c., which were anciently in great vogue, but are now discarded;) and since, 3. To speak roundly, their bare authority, whoever they were (for that doth not appear), could not be such as to oblige us to be of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend; they perhaps were such to whom we might owe much reverence, but should not be obliged to yield entire credence to their opinions. But further, 4. Were I bound to speak my sense, I should say, that, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did intend to affirm that our Saviour's soul did, by a true and proper kind of motion, descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth; where they conceived the souls of men were detained: for this appears to have been the more general and current opinion of these times, which it is probable they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

2. As to the second inquiry, concerning the signification of the words, what may be meant by *he descended;* whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body, called *he* by synecdoche: what by *descended*, whether (to omit that sense, which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the purpose; whether, I say) by *descending* may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below: what by *hell*, whether a state of being, or a place; if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones; or indifferently, and in common of both those; for such a manifold ambiguity these words have, or are made to have; and each of these senses are embraced and contended for: I shall not examine any of them, nor further meddle in the matter, than by saying,

1. That the Hebrew word *sheol* (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word *hell* (or *hades*) in this place is conceived to depend) doth seem originally, most properly, and most frequently (perhaps constantly, except when it is translated, as all words sometimes are, to a figurative use) to design the whole region protended downward from the surface of the earth to a depth (according to the vulgar opinion, as it seems anciently over the world) indefinite and unconceivable;* vastly capacious in extension, very darksome, desolate, and dungeon-like in quality (whence it is also frequently styled the *pit*, the *lowest pit*, the *abyss*, the *depths of the earth*, the *darkness*, the *depths of hell.*[a]) I need not labour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since it is obvious, that this *sheol* (when most absolutely and properly taken, the circumstances of discourse about it implying so much) is commonly opposed to *heaven*, not only in situation, but in dimension and distance; as when Job, speaking of the unsearchableness of the divine perfections, saith, *It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know?* and the prophet Amos; *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb into heaven, thence will I bring them down.*[b]

2. I say further, because the bodies (or visible remainders) of persons dying do naturally fall down, or are put into the bosom of this pit, which is therefore an universal grave and receptacle of them, therefore to die is frequently termed καταβαίνειν εἰς ᾅδου, or κατάγεσθαι εἰς ᾅδου, *to descend*, or to be brought down into this *hell;* which happening to all men without exception (for, as the Psalmist says, *there is no man that shall deliver his soul* (or his life, or himself) *from the hand of* this all-grasping *hell*), therefore it is attributed promiscuously to all men, good and bad alike;[c] *I will go down*

* Nobis inferi—in fosso terræ et in alto vastitas, et in ipsis visceribus ejus abstrusa profunditas.—*Tertull. de An.* 55; Ἀπώλεια, Prov. xv. 11; Διαφθορά, Prov. xxvii. 20.

[a] Isa. xxxviii. 18; Psal. lxxxviii. 6; Ecclus. xxi. 10; Psal. lxxi. 20; John ii. 6; Rom. x. 7; Psal. lxxi. 20; Job xvii. 13; Psal. cxliii. 3; Eccles. vi. 4; 1 Sam. ii. 9; Prov. ix. 18.

[b] Job xi. 8; Amos ix. 2; (Psal. cxxxix. 8;) (Deut. xxxii. 22; Isa. lvii. 9.)

[c] Psal. lxxxix. 48.

(saith good Jacob) *unto the grave, unto my son mourning* (καταβήσομαι εἰς ᾅδου, I will go down to *sheol*, this common grave of mankind;) and so frequently of others.[d] Whence this *hell* is apt figuratively to be put for, and to signify equivalently with, death itself; and it is once by the LXX. so translated (and St. Peter seems to use the phrase after them;) for death, I say, or for the law, condition, and state of death; as in that of Hezekiah in the Prophet Isaiah: *Sheol cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth:* where οἱ ἐν ᾅδου, and οἱ ἀποθανόντες (as the Greek renders *sheol* and *death*), are the same, and opposed to the living, of whom it is said, *The living, the living he shall praise thee.**

3. I say further, that this word, according to ancient use, seems not to signify the place whither men's souls do go, or where they abide; for that,

1. It can hardly be made appear that the ancient Hebrews either had any name appropriated to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly which way they did go; otherwise than that, as the Preacher speaks, *they returned unto God who gave them;* and that they did abide *in God's hand;* especially the souls of the just, according to that in the book of Wisdom, *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.*[e] And for that,

2. It seems they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, to go upward than downward; as the Preacher again intimates, when he differenceth the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts; *the soul of beasts descending with its body to the earth; the spirit of man ascending unto God*, to be disposed by him according to his pleasure and justice.[f] And by Enoch's *being taken to God* (whose special residence is expressed to be in heaven above), and by Elias's translation *up into heaven*[g] (as it is in the text of the history), it is probable they did rather suppose the souls of the righteous to ascend, than to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns, those μυχοὶ ᾅδου, *closets of hell*, as the book of Wisdom calls them; that βόθρος ᾅδου, *deep pit of hell*, as it is in Ben-Sirach; to ascend, I say, whether into the supreme heaven, or no, is not material; but somewhither above, nearer unto God's most special residence, into a happy place.[h]

3. I add, that if those ancients had by *sheol* meant the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions as those: *The grave (sheol) cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth;* so Hezekiah spake: *In death there is no remembrance of thee; in* sheol *who shall give thee thanks?* so David said: and, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in* sheol, *whither thou goest;*[i] so the Preacher; who hardly it seems could say so, if by *sheol* he meant the place of souls; except he should also mean, that souls after death became deprived of all life and sense. The son of Sirach likewise speaks in the same manner: ὑψίσιῳ τίς αἰνέσει ἐν ᾅδου; *Who shall praise the Most High in hell, instead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not: the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord.*[j]

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word ᾅδης was assumed by the Jews to design (as it did among the Greeks) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain for their bad lives here: Josephus doth often use the word in the first of these senses; and in the New Testament it seems peculiarly applied to the latter; as in the parable of the rich man, who being ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ, *in hell and torments*, did thence *lift up his eyes, and behold afar off Lazarus in Abraham's bosom:*[k] but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word *sheol;* especially considering how the Jews, after the prophetical days, in their

* 2 Sam. xxii. 6; Acts ii. 24.—Ὠδῖνες θανάτου, The sorrows of hell compassed me about, —Isa. xxxviii. 18. *Death* and *hades* are frequently joined as synonymous, — (Ecclus. xlviii. 5.)

[d] Gen. xxxvii. 35; xliv. 29, 31.

[e] Eccles. xii. 7; Wisd. iii. 1; (Deut. xxxiii. 3.)

[f] Eccles. iii. 21.

[g] Gen. v. 24; 2 Kings ii. 11.

[h] Wisd. xvii. 24; Ecclus. xxi. 10, 11; Οὐρανὸς ἔτι ἄβατος ἦν, Chrys. ad Heb. ix. 8; Eph. iii. 15; Heb. xi. 16; xii. 22; Isa. xxxviii. 18.

[i] Psal. vi. 5; Eccles. ix. 10.

[j] Ecclus. xviii. 27, 28.

[k] Luke xvi. 23.

dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did borrow some notions and expressions from elsewhere; which expressions our Saviour and his apostles might well retain, when they were suitable and accommodable unto truth.

3. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense in general of this principal word in the proposition, and of the rest depending thereon, as to their signification here; I do thus, as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning whereof the words are capable with truth, answer briefly:

1. If we do interpret the *descent into hell* here affirmed of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in the bosom of that universal grave we before spake of; or if (in a notion little differing from that) we take these words for a phrase (taking its ground thence in the manner forementioned) importing no otherwise than when it was spoken of Jacob and others, that our Saviour did really pass into the state of death; we are sure therein not to err; the proposition so understood being most certainly true: we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first and best (if not the only) reason of this proposition being commended to our belief. For that place in the Acts which seems to have been the occasion and the main ground of this proposition being asserted in these terms, doth not refuse, but commodiously admits this interpretation: for our Saviour's *soul not being left in hell, and not seeing corruption*, is plainly by St. Peter himself interpreted of his resurrection;[l] *David*, saith he, *foreseeing this, spake of Christ's resurrection;* and, in like manner, by St. Paul, *As concerning that he raised him from the dead, now no more to see corruption*, he said in this wise—that speech, I say, *Our Saviour's soul not being left in hell*, and, *not seeing corruption*, is by the apostles interpreted to denote our Saviour's resurrection; that is, his being freed from the bands of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh had undergone corruption; and it is opposed unto David's continuing in death and seeing corruption; his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave; the apostles not designing to assert or prove more than our Lord's resurrection; David, argue they, fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that state; David hath remained unto this day in the grave, and so his body being reduced to dust saw corruption; ἐτελεύτησε καὶ ἐτάφη, *he died and was buried*,[m] without any reversion: therefore that speech of his Psalm must not fully and ultimately be understood of him, to whom they did not so exactly agree; but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep, whose flesh, being opportunely raised, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, τὴν ψυχήν μου, *my soul*, or *my life;* nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition; for (to omit that bolder exposition of Beza, who sometimes did by the soul understand the dead body, translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro*) nothing is more usual than both for the flesh and for the soul (each of them synecdochically) to signify the person, considered as sometime endued with life: *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death;* and, *That soul shall be cut off*, are terms equivalent in the law: *The soul that eateth, the soul that toucheth*, and the like phrases, do often occur;[n] and those expressions, *To deliver their soul from death; God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; What man is he that shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* do seem parallel to this, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell;* which yet do import no more, than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death.[o]

Again, taking *soul* for the *living soul*, or that faculty by which we live, and *hell* for the state of death, the words mentioned, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, will have this natural exposition, agreeable to the apostle's design: Thou wilt not suffer me to continue deprived of life, till my flesh be corrupted. It is also observable, that St. Paul, in the 13th of the Acts, neglecting the former part, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell*, contents himself with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy One to see corruption;*

[l] Acts ii. 31; xiii. 34.

[m] Acts ii. 29.

[n] Exod. xxxi. 14; Levit. vii. 25, 27; v. 2, &c.

[o] Psal. xxxiii. 19; xlix. 15; lxxxix. 48.

intimating both parts to signify the same thing.

If it be objected as an inconvenience to this explication of the words here in the Creed, that, admitting it, they signify no more than what was before expressed in plain words, *dead and buried;* and so contain only a needless repetition; I answer,

1. That this objection concerns them who inserted the words here; who yet, even supposing this exposition to be good, might be excusable, as suspecting it possible that our Saviour's being ἐν ᾅδου, according to St. Peter, might imply more than this, although they knew not what distinctly; who also might perhaps intend somewhat by these words different from this sense, but not so truly applicable to them, or agreeable to the truth of the thing; I answer,

2. That to say our Saviour did continue in the state of death for some time, doth add somewhat above his being dead and buried; wherfore thus understanding the *descent* doth not render it altogether superfluous.

3. That a greater inconvenience seems to arise from expounding them otherwise; the doing so reflecting upon the more ancient compilers both of this and other breviaries of faith, as the Nicene and Constantinopolitan councils, Irenæus, Tertullian, &c. who left them out; which they should not have done, if they contain any thing highly material, and different from what is here otherwise expressed; whose credit is (as I conceive) more to be tendered, than of their juniors and followers unknown to us; and so much the more, for that in a matter of this kind, defect or omission is less tolerable, than any redundance in expression. Which inconvenience may seem in a manner to reach higher, even to St. Paul himself; who in the fifteenth chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, declaring the sum of what he both learned and taught concerning our Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions his death, burial, and resurrection: *I delivered unto you first, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day;*[p] which enumeration of his, we may, it seems, well acquiesce in, as sufficient and complete, and may thence with great probability infer, that no other *descent* of our Saviour *into hell*, beside his death and burial, was by him understood, or delivered in his catechetical discourses and preachings as a point of faith; so that what is objected as an inconvenience, proves no small advantage to this exposition. But I say further, to the main question, that,

2. Interpreting *hell* for the mansion, or habitation of souls departed hence (to omit that *sheol*, as I before noted, seems to signify otherwise in the Old Testament, and consequently thence the place in the Acts applied out of the Psalms would not be proper to this purpose; whereby the main ground and support of the assertion itself, taken according to this sense, were removed; waving, I say, that consideration, and taking ᾅδης, according to the meaning which we must confess it sometime to bear in the New Testament, yet), there seems to follow some inconvenience thereon.* For then we must either take it for the place of damned spirits, shut up in torment or despair, according to which acception the proposition itself would be most certainly uncertain, having no solid ground for it; and most probably false (for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into paradise: *This day*, said he to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in pardise*), or we must take it for a place common to all souls, as well good and blessed, as bad and miserable;[q] (for that it, in the New Testament at least, comprehends the place of torment, is evident by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.) But I think that St. Austin had reason to doubt whether it were consonant to the style of the New Testament, that *hades*, relating to the state of souls, should there be ever taken in a good or middle sense, at least; whereas it is said in the Revelation, that those two inseparable companions, *death* and *hades* (that *hades*, which is said to render up its dead to judgment), *were cast into the lake of fire*, it is hard to suppose that *paradise* was cast in there;[r] yea, hard it were to say that *hades* was cast in thither, supposing

* Εἰς ὃ πάντες οἴονται καθάπερ εἰς δοχεῖον ἐνθένδε τὰς ψυχὰς μετανίστασθαι.—Greg. Nyss. de Im. an.—Μετάβασις εἰς τὸ ἀειδὲς καὶ ἀφανές.—Id.

p 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

q Luke xxiii. 43.

r Rev. xx. 14.

that word did then in its usual latitude of signification (as Christians understood it) comprehend *paradise.* Yea further, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose paradise to be seated in a place beneath us, or within the earth; that paradise which is either the same with the third (or highest) heavens in St. Paul, or confining thereto; it is, I say, hard to be forced by an interpretation of these words, to consent, that paradise (that *locus divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatus; the place of divine* comfort and *amenity destined to receive the spirit of the saints*) should have its place in the darksome bowels of the earth;* no commodious situation, it seems, for a garden, for delightsome walks and bowers; yet so it must be seated, that our Saviour's soul may (at least in rigour and propriety of speech) be said to descend thereinto. The word *descend*, taking *hell* for the ancient *sheol*, is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentic use and the nature of the thing; but taking *hell* in this sense (for the place of souls), it is most probably improper, and hath no certain ground or authority to commend it; for it is said, that our Saviour's soul was in hell, not that it descended thither; nor can it by consequence be inferred so to have done, according to this meaning of *hell.* However,

3. I add, that seeing it is a most certain truth, that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the place appointed to receive happy souls after their recession from the body, and resignation into God's hands; if we take *hell* in a general and common sense for the place, or the state of souls departed; and descending for passing thereinto (by a falling, as it were, from life, or by going away together with the descent of the body; and thence styled descending; what appeareth visibly happening to the body being accommodated to the soul;) if, I say, we do thus interpret our Saviour's *descent into hell*, for his soul's going into the common receptacle and mansion of souls, we shall so doing be sure not substantially to mistake.

* 2 Cor. xii.—Οὔτε γὰρ ἐν ὑποχθονίοις εἴποι τις ἂν τὸν παράδεισον, οὔτε ἐν παραδείσῳ τὰ ὑποχθόνια, &c.—Greg. Nyss. tom. 2; de Resur. 1; Tertull. Apol. 47.

And this sense, I conceive, if the words can handsomely bear it, would be very proper to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct from what is otherwise expressed, and serving to the further establishment of those great articles adjoining, our Lord's *death* and *resurrection;* it implying the perfect accomplishment of death, for the soul to have deserted the body, and to have been translated into that ἀδύνατον ᾅδην, (as the book of Wisdom calls it), that *invisible region*, so far distant hence, whence—*revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras*, is a labour indeed, and a work not to be effected, but by the power of him whose prerogative it is *to kill and make alive; to bring down to hell, and to bring up; to lead unto the gates of hell and to bring back again.*[s]

This is all that I shall say about this intricate point; for I cannot well be at the pains to consider or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why and to what effect our Saviour descended into hell.

That our Lord went thither to preach unto, convert, and redeem from thence, all or some of the damned souls (for some say that he depopulated and emptied that region of darkness; others are not so liberal as to free all thence, but only the fitter objects of compassion and favour; both saying that which hath very weak or no reasons to maintain, very strong and plain objections to assail it.[t])

That he went to rescue and conduct into glory the souls of the patriarchs, and other good persons, from that infernal *limbus*, in which till then they were detained (a place by no likely means to be proved existent otherwhere than in the fancy of its inventors;) or, that he went to deliver the souls of the just, and prophets, from the wicked powers into whose power they had fallen (as Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Tryphon, p. 105.)

That he went to affront, triumph over, and terrify the powers of darkness upon their own ground, or in their own dominions.[u]

[s] Wisd. xvii. 14; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Deut. xxxii. 39; Tob. xiii. 2; Wisd. xvi. 13.

[t] Iren. iv. 45; v. 31; Euseb. Hist. 1, ult.; Clem. Str. ii. p. 163; vi. p. 271; Euseb. Demonst. x. 8; Athan. Const. Apollin.

[u] *Vide* Montac. Orig. Part. Post. p. 442, et in Appar. 1.

These and the like conceits seem enough discountenanced by saying, the scriptures nowhere plainly declare any such thing, and that therefore they have no good ground to stand upon (they pretend only one or two difficult and obscure places in the First Epistle of St. Peter, which are capable of fair expositions not favourable to them ;) whereas, in teaching us that our Lord preached upon earth salvation to them who in this life should be converted to believe upon him and obey his laws ; damnation irrecoverable to them who should persist in infidelity and disobedience : that he merited by his obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a redemption from all future distress and a translation into bliss ;[v] that he by his death vanquished all the powers of hell, and triumphed over them upon the cross : in these things the scripture is very clear and copious. But concerning that redemption of souls beneath, that translation of souls out of subterraneous closets, or prisons (as they call them), that local triumph in the Devil's kingdom, it is quite silent, or very dark in expression about them ;[x] whence we may well be somewhat backward in yielding assent to such devices, of which, if any perhaps should be true, yet could not the belief thereof be of necessity, or great importance to us : for what our Saviour so did below would not belong to the salvation of the living, which is abundantly provided for by his death and resurrection, with what followed them, nor would it much refer to our practice, which is otherwise sufficiently directed and encouraged. So that we may, however, safely be ignorant in regard to any of those notions. But let it suffice to have discoursed thus far about this endless question ; except we will end it with that saying of St. Austin, *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis :* or with that more peremptory saying of Calvin, *Atqui stultum et temerarium est de rebus incognitis altius inquirere, quam Deus nobis scire permittit.**

* *Vide* Fidei Symbola in Codice Justinian.—*Tit.* 1, *De Gen. ad lit.* viii. 5, Calv. Inst. iii. 25, 6.

[v] Heb. ii. 14 ; Coloss. ii. 15. [x] Bellarm.

He rose again from the Dead.

SERMON XXIX.

Acts i 3.—*To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*

The most proper and most usual way of God, in confirming any truth of high moment in special manner revealed by him, is by lending unto them whom he employs as messengers thereof his powerful arm, for the performance of works supernatural or miraculous. Of such works there is none more certainly such, than raising a dead person to life ; the doing which, upon several accounts plainly surpasseth the power of any creature ; not only as exceeding the ordinary law and course of nature established and upheld by God, but for that the souls of men departing hence do return into God's hand, or into a state by his sentence determined, whence no creature is able to fetch them down, or raise them up ; because also God hath reserved the prerogative of doing this unto himself ; he *holding* (as it is expressed in the Revelation) *the keys of hell and of death ;* he having said, *I am he, and there is no God beside me ; I kill, and I make alive.*[a]

There could also particularly be no more proper way of confirming our religion to come from God, whether we consider the persons whom it was designed for, or the doctrines it propounded. The Jews were uncapable of conviction by any other way than by miracle ; no other reason would have been apprehended by them, or would have had any force upon them : *The Jews* (saith St. Paul) *require a sign ;* and, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe,* said our Saviour to them.[b] The Gentiles also had been so used to the winding off and on the subtilties and the plausibilities of disputation, that nothing probably in that

[a] Rev. i. 18 ; Deut. xxxii. 39 ; 1 Sam. ii. 6 ; Psal. lxviii. 20.

[b] 2 Cor. i. 22 ; John iv. 48.

kind would have sufficed to persuade them; and therefore somewhat miraculous in the highest kind might be needful to convert them: also the most peculiar and eminent doctrines of our religion (such as are, *Our Lord Jesus being the Messias, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world;* the *future resurrection, general judgment*, and dispensation of rewards, answerable to men's practice in this life) cannot more immediately and directly be assured, than by the resurrection from the dead of him who principally did reveal them.

Wherefore Almighty God in confirmation of our religion did perform this great work in raising Jesus our Lord from the dead; and withal (for the conviction of the world, for rendering our faith reasonable and our infidelity inexcusable) he did take especial care, that the fact should by very sufficient testimony be conveyed unto us; to which purpose he did, as St. Peter saith, προχειροτονεῖν, predesign, pick out, and appoint a competent number of persons, in all respects capable and fit to assert it: thus is that which St. Luke in our text doth in way of historical narration affirm.[c] And because the truth thereof is in its kind the principal argument whereby the truth of our religion in gross may be evinced, we shall for the confirmation of our faith against all impressions of this incredulous (and therefore impious) age, endeavour by God's assistance now to declare and maintain it. That Jesus truly died, all the world could testify; no death was ever more solemn or remarkable; nor do any adversaries contest it; that he after that death was by divine power raised again to life, is that which we believe and assert. Now, whoever with reason shall doubt thereof or deny it, must do it either because of some repugnance in the fact itself, implying that it could not well be done; or from deficiency of the testimony proving it, as to its authors or circumstances: but neither of these exceptions may reasonably be admitted.

As for the fact itself, or the notion of a resurrection in general, there cannot (admitting that, which, as capable of antecedaneous proof, and as acknowledged by all persons owning any religion, may be presupposed, the power and providence of God, together with his chief attributes of wisdom and goodness incomprehensible), there cannot be any repugnance therein, or any incredibility. For it was neither in its nature impossible to God, or in its design unworthy of him; it contained nothing apparently either beyond the power of God, or presumable to be against his will.

1. To raise a dead man to life, is indeed, we confess and avow, a work surpassing the power of any creature not assisted by God; but no reason can be assigned why it should go beyond the divine power. The doing it doth not involve contradiction, and is therefore an object of power, and at least is achievable by Omnipotence: let the soul be what it will, and in whatever life may be supposed to consist, nothing can hinder that God may reduce the parts of a man into the same state they sometime before were in. And very easily it is conceivable, that he who (according to the general notions and current traditions of mankind) did first inspire the soul of man into his body, may reinfuse it, being separated; that he who after death keepeth it in his hand, may thence restore it; who also (according to histories received in all the principal religions that have been in the world) hath often actually performed it. Pliny indeed doth reckon this among instances of things absolutely impossible: *It is* (saith he) *a great solace of our imperfect nature, that even God cannot do all things; for neither can he bring death upon himself, if he would, nor bestow eternity on mortals, nor recall the dead to life:** but it is no wonder that he who thought the soul quite to perish by death, should conceive the restitution thereof impossible; although, even supposing that, his opinion was not reasonable; for even any thing, how corruptible soever by dissolution of its ingredients, or alteration of its temperament, may, by re-collecting and rejoining those ingredients, or by re-establishing the causes of such a temperament, be restored (as a house whose materials are dispersed may

[c] Acts x. 41.

* Imperfectæ vero in homine naturæ præcipua solatia sunt, ne Deum quidem posse omnia; nam neque sibi potest mortem consciscere si velit (quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ malis) nec mortales æternitate donare, nec revocare defunctos.—*Plin.* ii. 7.

be re-edified, or as a liquor by a new fermentation may be revived ;) which to effect may not be deemed hard to him that made the whole world : however, to such as him we may say, as our Saviour did to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*[d] Especially to those who acknowledge the immortality of the soul, or its permanence in a separate state, and who admit the truth of the ancient histories among the Jews, it is not only most evidently possible, but very credible, that God upon any considerable occasion should perform it : with such St. Paul might well thus expostulate ; *What ? doth it seem incredible to you, that God should raise the dead ?*[e] to you that have such previous notions and persuasions about God's omnipotency (such as the prophet Jeremiah expresseth when he saith, *Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee :*) to you who avow God to be the *Father of spirits*, who *formeth the spirit of man within him*, and that when man dieth, *his spirit returneth to God who gave it :*[f] to you who believe that our souls are spiritual substances like unto angels, subsisting after death, and destined to future rewards : to you, in fine, who may in your holy records find so many experiments of this power exerted by God in his prophets ; such as that of Elias's restoring the widow of Sarepta's son ; of Elisha raising the son of the Shunamite ; that of the dead man reviving when his body touched the prophet's bones : to you therefore this fact cannot be in itself incredible ; nor indeed can it, for the reason suggested, to any man reasonably seem impossible.[g]

2. Nor was it apparently in its design unworthy of God, or inconsistent with his holy will : for the ends thereof (such as were pretended by the attesters of it) were, as very great and important, so most good and reasonable ; it aimed at no slight or trifling matter, but such as in appearance highly concerned the glory of God, and conduced to the welfare of mankind ; it professing itself to be a credential of the greatest embassy that ever came down from heaven to men, importing the complete revelation of God's will and procurement of salvation to the world ; and did therefore in that respect well become the wisdom and goodness of God to use it. It pretended to confirm a doctrine containing most true and worthy representations of God, the best that could be ; declaring most gracious intentions in God of mercy and kindness toward men ; no less proper for him than grateful and needful for us ; prescribing most excellent rules and patterns of life (wherein the most genuine piety and virtue, most exact justice and hearty charity, most strict purity and sobriety, are prescribed), yielding the most effectual helps to the practice of all goodness, and tendering the best encouragement thereto ; and upon this account therefore also most worthy of God. So that indeed God could not be conceived to perform such a miracle to better purpose, than for promoting the designs it pretendeth, being so very great, and so very good : it could not be improper for the divine power to be thus exerted in favour of a religion so apt to promote his glory, and to procure our benefit.

If it be said, that it is absurd or improbable that God should choose to perform this miracle upon a person of this sort ; one so mean and obscure in the state of his life, so wretched and infamous for the manner of his death ; that God rather should have chosen for the interpreter of his mind, and minister of his purposes, a personage more illustrious in rank, and clear in repute ; I answer, first, that our shallow fancy is a bad and incompetent judge, of what is reasonable or absurd, convenient or unfit, in such cases, touching the counsels of God ; *who seeth not as man* seeth ; *whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor ways as our ways ;* whose folly *is wiser than men* (that is, whose counsels, however seeming strange to our dim apprehensions, do yet far excel the results of our best wisdom ;[h]) before whom *whatever is high among men is abominable ; with whom the wisdom of this world is folly ;*

[d] Jer. xxxii. 17 ; Matt. xxii. 29.

[e] Acts xxvi. 8.

[f] Jer. xxxii. 17 ; Zech. viii. 6 ; Job xlii. 2 ; Heb. xii. 9 ; Num. xvi. 22 ; xxvii. 16 ; Zech. xii. 1 ; Isa. lvii. 16 ; Eccles. xii. 1.

[g] 1 Kings xvii. 21 ; 2 Kings iv. 35 ; xiii. 21.

[h] 1 Sam. xvi. 7 ; Isa. lv. 8 ; xl. 13 ; 2 Cor. i. 25.

whose *judgments are unsearchable, and his ways are past finding out;* as the holy scriptures teach us;[i] and as good reason, considering the vast distance between God and us, must acknowledge: so that no such appearance of incongruity can bottom a good exception against this, or any such matter, otherwise well attested. I say further, that God's choice herein, being weighed by a pure and well-disposed mind, will appear upon many accounts full of admirable reason and wisdom; all the divine economy concerning our Lord, being rightly apprehended, will soon appear *wisdom to the perfect*, and will *be justified by the children of wisdom:*[j] as that wherein God's transcendent goodness, and perfect justice, and glorious power, are with greatest advantage displayed; whereby the hearts of men are most sweetly comforted under their sense of sin and fear of misery, their minds are most clearly instructed in the ways of duty and happiness, their affections are most strongly excited and encouraged to the practice of all goodness; to such purposes (for causes which, were it now seasonable, we could produce) our Saviour's low condition and hard circumstances did admirably serve; and therefore upon that score it could not be unlikely that God should raise him from the dead.

3. But neither (which is the most considerable point) is the testimony asserting this fact anywise defective or insufficient, but hath all the conditions imaginably requisite to the most entire assurance of any such matter. The defect in the testimony, if any be, must arise from weakness or from wilfulness in the witnesses, (their want of knowledge or mistake, their want of honesty or their unfaithfulness), or from some circumstances belonging to their persons, or their testimony, able to invalidate their attestation; but none of these things can with reason be supposed; they were in all respects more than competently qualified to attest, and all considerable circumstances do assist in confirming their attestation; as by weighing the considerations following may appear.

1. As for their number, it was not one or two persons (although one or two ordinarily do suffice for decision of the greatest cases among men), but many who conspired in asserting it. *He was* (saith St. Paul, one who was conversant with these witnesses, who, of a zealous adversary and fierce persecutor of this testimony, did become an earnest avoucher thereof) *seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present.*[k] And, *This Jesus* (say the twelve apostles) *hath God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses:*[l] twelve there were who principally were designed, and did take it for their especial duty to attest this matter, beside many others, who in their order were able and ready to do it.

2. These witnesses were no strangers to Jesus, but persons by long conversation most familiarly acquainted with him; *who had* (as it is said, and as it was notorious) *been with him from the beginning, who went out and in with him all the time* (that is, for three year's space) *from his baptism to his ascension.*[m]

3. They did aver themselves to be αὐτόπτας τοῦ λόγου, or αὐτηκόους, eye or ear witnesses of the matter, as fully informed about it as senses could make them: *We cannot but speak what we have heard and seen: What we did see with our eyes, and what our hands did handle of the word of life, that we report unto you;* so St. John (the beloved disciple, who constantly attended on his dear Master) expresseth his testimony: and, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty;* so Peter affirmeth concerning the manner of their testifying these matters.[n] They did, I say, hear and see him, and that with all advantage possible or needful, not once or twice, not in passing, or at distance, not in way of glimpse or rumour; but often, for a good time, thoroughly; many days conversing and interchanging discourses with him; *who* (as St. Peter in the name of the rest

[i] Luke xvi. 15; 1 Cor. v. 13; Rom. xi. 33; (Psal. xcii. 5; xxxvi. 7;) Job xi. 7.
[j] 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7, 14; Matt. xi. 19.
[k] 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6.
[l] Acts ii. 14, 32; v. 32; i. 22; x. 39.
[m] John xv. 27; Acts i. 21, 22.
[n] Luke i. 2; Acts iv. 20; 1 John i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 16.

saith) *did eat and drink with him after that he rose from the dead:* and, *To whom* (as St. Luke, their companion, from their mouth in our text saith) *also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:* and, *He was* (saith St. Paul, another familiar of theirs) *seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people.*[o] And two of these witnesses, St. John and St. Matthew, are in writings extant relators of passages occurring in their conversation with him, very many, very sensible as can be.

4. We may also consider that the chief of these witnesses, the apostles themselves, were at first (as St. Luke of them and from them confesseth) so far from being easy or credulous in regard to this matter, that, hearing it from others, who before had seen our Lord risen, they took it for a trifle, or a fiction, and gave no credence thereto; *their word* (saith the text), ἐφάνησαν ὡσεὶ λῆρος, *did seem to them* (*a toy, or*) *an idle tale, and they believed them not.*[p] Yea, some of them would hardly confide in their own eyes, nor would yield assent unto the fact appearing to them, until, by letting them touch him, and showing them the marks of his crucifixion remaining on his body, he demonstrated himself to be the very same person who had lived with them and died before them: *they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit—and while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered,* &c., are words in the history.[q]

5. Upon these grounds, as they professed, they did, without any mincing, hesitancy, or reservation, in the most full, clear, downright, and peremptory manner, with firm confidence and alacrity, concurrently aver the fact: *They spake the word of God with boldness—and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.*[r]

Which things being weighed, it will appear impossible that the attestors of this fact (supposing them in their wits and senses; and certainly they were so, as presently we shall show, and as the thing itself plainly speaks) could not be ignorant therein, or mistaken about it.* For if all the senses of so many persons in a matter so grossly sensible, so often, and for such a continuance of time, can be distrusted; if the apostles could imagine they saw their Friend and Master, whom they so long had waited upon, when they did not see him; that they heard him making long discourses with them, when they did not hear him; that they did walk, eat, and drink with him, did touch and feel him, when there was really no such thing; what assurance can we have of any thing most sensible? what testimony can be of any validity or use? On that hand, therefore, the testimony is impregnable, the witnesses cannot be accounted ignorant or mistaken in the case; for number, or for ability, they cannot be excepted against.

It must be, therefore, only their seriousness, honesty, or fidelity, that remains questionable in them; they must be said to have wilfully deceived and imposed upon the world; self-condemned hypocrites, impudent liars, and egregious impostors, they must have been, if their testimony was false: but that they were not such persons, that they could not, and would not do so, there are inducements to believe, as forcible as can be required or well imagined in any such case.

1. They were persons who did (with denunciation of most heavy judgments from God on the contrary practices) preach and press constantly and earnestly all kinds of goodness, veracity, and sincerity, together with humility, modesty, ingenuity, and equity, as main points of that religion, which they by this testimony confirmed. All their discourses plainly breathed a most serious and sprightly goodness and charity toward men, very inconsistent with a base plot to delude them; their doctrine utterly condemned all malice, all falsehood, craft, and hypocrisy, detruding into the bottomless pit all *that love or make a lie.* Consider these sayings and rules of theirs: *As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men: Let your moderation* (or equity) *be.*

[o] Acts x. 41; i. 3; xiii. 31.
[p] Luke xxiv. 11; Matt. xxviii. 17.
[q] Luke xxiv. 37, 41; John xx. 27.
[r] Acts iv. 31, 33; xiv. 3.

* Ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν,—2 Cor iv. 13.

known to all men: Show all meekness to all men: Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speaking, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: Putting aside all lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds: Brethren, be not children in understanding: however in malice be ye children, but in understanding be perfect men.[s] Such were their precepts, discountenancing all malice and all fraud; propounded in a manner as serious and grave and simple as can be imagined; all the tenor of their doctrine consenting to them: wherein also they earnestly declare against and prohibit all vanity of mind and perverseness of humour; all affectations of novelty and singularity; all peevish factiousness and turbulency; all fond credulity, stupidity, and precipitancy; all instability and giddiness of mind; all such qualities, which dispose men without most sure and evident grounds, either to introduce or to embrace any new conceits, practices, or stories: such was their discourse, nowise sounding like the language of impostors; deceit could hardly so disguise or so thwart and supplant itself.

2. Their practice was answerable to their doctrine, exemplary in all sorts of virtue, goodness, and sincerity; such indeed whereby they did in effect conciliate much respect and authority to their words: *Ye are witnesses* (they could, appealing to the observers of their demeanour, and to the all-knowing God, say), *and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:*[t] and, *We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*[u] Such a lively sense of goodness shining forth in a long course of practice; so to bridle appetites, so to moderate passions, so to eschew all the allurements of pleasure, profit, and honour; to bear adversities so calmly and sweetly; to express so much tender kindness and meekness toward all men; to be continually employed in heavenly discourses and pious works; exhorting men by word, leading them by example, to all sorts of goodness indisputably such: to live thus, long and constantly, doth nowise suit unto persons utterly debauched in mind, and of a profligate conscience; who had devised, and did then earnestly drive on the propagation of a vile cheat. The life, I say, they led, was not the life of wicked impostors, but worthy of the divinest men; fit to countenance and carry on the best design, such as they pretended theirs to be.

3. Further, they were persons of good sense; yea, very wise and prudent: not in way of worldly or fleshly wisdom; in skill to contrive or compass projects of gain, honour, or pleasure to themselves: to the commendation of them and of their testimony, they disclaimed being wise or skilful that way; having no practice therein, nor caring for it (for *they looked not* much *on things temporal and* transitory; they did *not mind earthly things;* they had not *their conversation*, or interest, here, but *above, as citizens* of another world, deeming themselves as but *sojourners and pilgrims here;*[v]) but endued they were with a wisdom, as in itself far more excellent, so more suitable to the persons they sustained; with great perspicuity and sound judgment in the matters they discoursed about, and in the affairs they pursued: such their writings, according to acknowledgment of innumerable most wise and learned persons, fraught with admirable wisdom and heavenly philosophy (rude indeed and simple in expression, but most exact and profound in sense), do manifest them to have been;[w] such the tenor of their doctrine evidenced them, shining with that lustre and beauty, compacted with that strength and harmony, that whoever will not confess it to have proceeded from God, must, upon consideration, however, allow, that it could not have been devised by idiots or mean persons, but did come from persons of much

[s] Rev. xxii. 15; xxi. 27; Gal. vi. 10; Phil. iv. 5; Tit. iii. 2; 1 Pet. ii. 1; Eph. iv. 25, 15; Col. iii. 9; 1 Cor. xiv. 20; Tit. ii. 7, 8.

[t] 1 Thess. ii. 10.

[u] 2 Cor. iv. 2, 6; ii. 17; Phil. iii. 17.

[v] 1 Cor. i. 20; ii. 5, 6; 2 Cor. i. 12; xi. 6; 2 Cor. iv. 18; Col. iii. 2; Phil. iii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 11.

[w] 2 Cor. xi. 6; 1 Cor. ii. 1, 13.

subtility and great reach: they must be no fools who could frame a religion merely by its own plausibility, without any external help, able presently to supplant all the religions in the world; and to stand durably firm upon the foundations laid by them. Such also the notable conduct of their great affair (notwithstanding so mighty disadvantages and difficulties), together with the prodigious efficacy their endeavours had upon men, do evince them to have been: they surely could not be weak men, who in a plain and peaceable way confounded all the wit and policy, all the learning and eloquence, all the force and violence that withstood them.* Experience did attest to the truth of what St. Paul saith: *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*[x]

4. So were they qualified in their minds:[y] it must be further also considered, as to their purposes in this case, that in falsely venting and urging this testimony, they could not have any design gainful or beneficial to themselves; but must therein to no end be mischievous to themselves and others; abusing others indeed, but far more harming themselves; they must be supposed voluntarily to have embraced all sorts of inconvenience, and designedly to have rendered themselves miserable; courting adversity, choosing naked and barren evil for its own sake: *For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: for neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: neither of men sought we glory.*[z] Profit, honour, or pleasure (those baits which entice men to do evil, and *set them upon* wicked attempts), or any worldly advantage thence to accrue to themselves, they could have no design upon; for all those things wittingly and willingly they did abandon; for the sake of this very testimony incurring extremities of loss, of disgrace, and of pain. They did plainly foresee what entertainment their testimony would find, and how in prosecution thereof they should be forced to endure all kinds of indignity, of damage, and of hardship from men; that *in this world they should have tribulation;* that *men should deliver them up to be afflicted, and should kill them;* and that they should *be hated of all nations for his name's sake;*[a] their Master expressly had forewarned them, that *all who would live godlily in Christ Jesus* (that is, all professors of faith in him, especially the teachers thereof) *must suffer persecution;*[b] and *must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God;* that *bonds and imprisonments did abide them in every place:*[c] that *God had set forth the apostles as appointed unto death*, and exposed them *as spectacles* of scorn and obloquy *to the world;*[d] that they were *called to suffering*, and *appointed to this very thing*, as to their office and their portion:[e] these were the rules and measures they went by; these the expectations they had from the world: according unto which it did in effect happen to them; *Even to this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and as the offscouring of all things unto this day.*[f] So doth St. Paul describe the apostle's condition.

5. All these afflictions, as they knowingly did object themselves to for the sake of this testimony, so they did endure them with contentedness and joy; when they had been beaten, *they departed, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus; rejoicing that they were made partakers of Christ's sufferings;* deeming it a privilege that *was given them, not only to believe in him, but to suffer for his name;* thinking themselves *happy in being reproached for the name of Christ; taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods;*

* Πῶς αὐτὸ κατώρθωσαν μαινόμενοι καὶ ἐξεστηκότες, &c.—Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 5, elegantissime.

[x] Acts vi. 10; 1 Cor. i. 27; 2 Cor. x. 4.

[y] *Vide* Chrys. ibid.

[z] 1 Thess. ii. 3, 5.

[a] John xvi. 33; xv. 20; xvi. 2; Matt. xxiv. 9.

[b] Luke xxi. 12; 2 Tim. iii. 12.

[c] Acts xiv. 22; xx. 23.

[d] 1 Cor. iv. 9.

[e] 1 Pet. ii. 21; 1 Thess. iii. 3.

[f] 1 Cor. iv. 11, 12, 13; (2 Cor. iv. 8.)

counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Lord, for whom they suffered the loss of all things.[g]

6. Whence it is evident enough, that the satisfaction of their conscience, and expectation of future reward from God for the discharge of their duty herein, was all the argument which did induce them to undertake this attestation, all the reason that could support them in it; neither of which could be consistent with the resolved maintenance of such a falsehood. They could not indeed but grievously be tormented with remorse in their minds, they could not but dread severe vengeance from heaven, had they been conscious to themselves of so villainous a design of mocking God (whose name and express command they pretended, whose testimony and judgment they appealed to in this affair), and together of abusing the world with such an imposture. Such must have been their inward sense, and such their expectations, had they proceeded with a guilty conscience in this business; but they do seriously profess otherwise, and the condition of things might assure us they were in good earnest: Εἰς τοῦτο, *For this end* (saith St. Paul) *we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe:*[h] and, *Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world:*[i] and, *Knowing the fear of the Lord* (that is, being sensible of our duty toward God, and fearful of his judgment, if we transgress it), *we persuade men; but are made manifest unto God.*[j] So they declare what principle it was that moved them to this practice; and the hope encouraging them in it they often express: *If* (said they) *we suffer with Christ, we shall be glorified together with him:* and, *We always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body:* and, *It is a faithful saying, if we are dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us:* and, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.*[k] So they profess concerning the grounds and reasons of their maintaining this testimony (and the points connected therewith) with so great present inconvenience to themselves: and the state of things rendereth their profession most credible; for they appear not so blind as not to see those inconveniences, nor so fond as to like them for themselves, or upon no considerable account; they confess, that they should be very stupid and senseless people, if they had incurred and underwent all this to no purpose, or without hope of good recompense for it after this life: *If Christ be not risen* (saith St. Paul) *then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, that he raised up Christ;—then we have only hope in this life;* and, *if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*[l]

7. And how indeed is it conceivable, that such persons should be so bewitched with so passionate an affection, or so mighty a respect, toward a poor dead man (one who was born so obscurely, who lived so poorly, who died so miserably and infamously, as a malefactor; who indeed so died to their knowledge most deservedly, supposing they did know their testimony to be false; one who never was capable to oblige them, or to recompense them for their actings and sufferings in any valuable measure), that merely for his sake, or rather not for his sake, but only for a smoke of vain opinion about him (which could nowise profit either him or them), they should with an inflexible obstinacy defy all the world; expose themselves to all the persecutions of the world, and to all the damnations of hell. St. Paul surely had another opinion of Jesus, when he said, *Who shall*

[g] Acts v. 41; 1 Pet. iv. 13; Phil. i. 29; 1 Pet. iv. 14; Heb. x. 34; Phil. iii. 9; (1 Pet. i. 6; Rom. v. 3; James i. 2.)

[h] Acts iv. 19; v. 29; 2 Cor. ii. 17; iv. 2; 2 Cor. ix. 16; 1 Tim. iv. 10. [i] 2 Cor. i. 12.

[j] 1 Cor. v. 11.

[k] Rom. viii. 17; 2 Cor. iv. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 11; (1 Pet. i. 7; iv 13;) 2 Tim. iv. 8.

[l] 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15, 19, 30, 31.

separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us: for I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.[m] Could they, think we, speak thus, who knew Jesus to be a wicked deceiver, worthily hated of God and men? No assuredly; their speech and behaviour do palpably show that therefore they did bear so vehement an affection, and so high a respect toward Jesus, because, as with their mouths they openly professed, so they were in their hearts thoroughly persuaded, that he was the Son of God most dear unto him; who died for their sake; who was to their knowledge raised again; who also, according to his promises, would recompense their faithful adherence to him with eternal joy and bliss.

8. Again, we may consider these witnesses to have of themselves been persons very unlikely to devise such a plot, very unfit to undertake it, very unable to manage and carry it through:[n] persons they were of no reputation for birth, for wealth, for any worldly interest; persons of no education, no improvement, no endowments of mind (natural or artificial) anywise considerable: they were, as to condition and manner of life, fishermen, publicans, and mechanics;* as to abilities of mind, they were (as they report themselves) ἀγράμματοι, καὶ ἰδιῶται, illiterate and simple: they were also men of no great natural spirit or courage, but rather irresolute and timorous, as their deserting their Master, their renouncing him, their flying and skulking, reported by themselves, declare:[p] *the base*, or ignoble, the *despicable*, or abject, the *weak*, the *foolish things of the world*, they did style themselves; and in that no adversary will, I suppose, contradict them.[q] And is it possible, that a few (in this respect I mean very few) persons thus conditioned and qualified, should have the wit to contrive, or the courage to maintain, a forgery of such importance? What hope they could frame to themselves of any success therein, upon so extreme disadvantages, is to any man very obvious.* No kind of friends in all the world could they imagine ready to back them, or yield them any encouragement; but heaven, hell, and earth, they had reason to expect all to be combined in opposition to them and their design: they had all reason to fear that God himself would cross them, and blast their wicked endeavours to propagate the belief of such a lie, which most profanely they dared to father on him, and to vent in his name. They could not hope the father of lies himself, or any powers of darkness, would be favourable or helpful to them, whose interest they so manifestly impugned; that the success of their doctrine, whether true or false, could not but much prejudice their kingdom; as in effect we see that it did in a manner quite subvert it: they were sure among men to encounter the most potent and most earnest adversaries that could be; all the grandees of the world, both political and religious, deeply concerned in honour and interest to labour with all their power the detection of their cheat, and overthrow of their design: whence it must be a boldness more than human, more than gigantic, that could bear up against all these adversaries, if their testimony was in their conscience false. Against all these oppositions and disadvantages, what could those poor men have to confide in, beside the natural prevalence of truth, and divine assistance thereto; being in their hearts assured of the former, and therefore greatly hoping for the latter?

9. And how indeed could such a cheat, contrived and conducted by so (to human esteem) weak and silly a knot of people, so easily prosper, and obtain so wonderful a progress, so as presently to induce very many persons, μυριάδες πεπιστευκότων (*myriads of believers*, as it is Acts xxi. 20), many of them considerable (even

* Οὔτε γὰρ λόγων ἰσχύϊ, &c.—Chrys. tom. v. Or. 64.——Τίνι θαρρήσαντες; ἄρα τῷ καλάνῳ καὶ τῷ ἀγκίστρῳ, ἢ τῇ σμίλῃ καὶ τῷ τρυπάνῳ, &c. Ibid.

[m] Rom. viii. 35, &c. [n] Rom. x. 9.

[o] *Vide* Chrys. tom. vi. Or. lxi. p. 61.

[p] Acts iv. 13; Matt. xxvi 56; John xx. 19.

[q] 1 Cor. i. 27, 28; ὀστράκινα σκεύη, 2 Cor. iv. 7.

* Καὶ οὐκ ἂν οὕτως εὐτελέσι καὶ ταπεινοῖς πλάσαι τί τοιοῦτον ἐπῆλθέ ποτε, πλὴν εἰ μαίνεσθαί τις αὐτοὺς φαίη καὶ παραπαίειν, &c.—Ibid. in Babylam.

πολὺν ὄχλον ἱερέων, *a great crowd or company of priests*, as it is said in the Acts), to embrace it, together with all crosses and damages attending it?[r] so as to escape all inquisition about it, and overbear all persecution against it, being neither convincible by proof, nor controllable by force; but in despite of all assaults holding its ground, and running forward with huge success; according to that in the Acts, *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*[s]

10. The matter of their testimony (if we consider that as we should do) and its drift were very implausible, such as no impostors would be likely to forge, and no hearers, without great evidence of truth, would be ready to admit. It was no fine story, apt to please the lusts, to flatter the humours, or to gratify the fancies of men; but rather very distasteful to flesh and blood (whose inclinations it mainly thwarted), likely to offend the ears of all men who should hear it; apt to raise fierce anger and indignation in Jews, great contempt and scorn in Gentiles toward it.* The Jews, to whom it was first addressed, it did plainly charge with heinous iniquity and impiety in cruelly murdering a Person most innocent, most excellent in virtue and dignity, most dear to God; it withal defeated their longings for a gaudy Messias, who should restore and rear them into a lofty state of temporal prosperity, substituting in the room a spiritual King, with overtures of felicity invisible and future, little suiting their gross conceit and carnal gust of things; it also imported the abrogation of those ritual laws, and revolution of those special privileges, wherein they did so please and pride themselves; it opened the enclosures of God's favour and grace, making them common to all people; it crossed their secular interests of emolument and honour annexed to the present outward frame of religion, which it dissolved;[t] it menaced severe vengeance and horrible desolation to their nation and city: and was such a report likely to be entertained by them otherwise than with displeasure and detestation? Neither unto the Gentiles was it likely to be acceptable; for it did also subvert all the religion established among them by law and custom, destroying consequently all the interests of those who were concerned in upholding thereof; such as those who made that famous uproar, crying out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians:*[u] it seemed to thwart the common maxims of policy, and dictates of worldly prudence; it could not but appear, to men prepossessed with admiration of secular wealth, power, and glory, a story most ridiculously extravagant, that so pitiful and wretched a person, as Jesus seemed in the eye of the world to have been, should in this miraculous way be declared the Son of God and Lord of all things, author of life and salvation to all men, sovereign object of all worship and obedience: such a story, therefore, it was not likely that any men in their senses should conspire to forge, should offer to obtrude on the world, so uncapable of it, so averse from embracing it; and being such, it were strange that by a general repulse it should not presently be stifled and quelled.*

11. One would indeed think that this report, had it been false, might easily have been disproved and quashed: they who were mightily concerned, and as eagerly disposed to confute it, wanted no means of doing it: they were not surprised in the matter;[v] but were forewarned of it, and did forbode it coming; they were not drowsy or neglectful, but very apprehensive, careful and cautious in preventing it, that it should not be produced, or, being so, that it might be defeated; for to this purpose they caused

* Τί δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ λίγοντες ἐδόκουν ἂν εἶναι πιθανοί; &c.—Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. v.

Si rem credibilem crediderunt, videant quam sint stolidi qui non credunt: si autem res incredibilis credita est, etiam hoc utique incredibile est, sic creditum esse quod incredibile est, &c.—*Aug. de Civitate Dei*, xxii. 5; *vide* Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61.

[r] Acts vi. 7.

[s] 2 Thess. iii. 1; Acts xix. 20; vi. 7; xii. 20; κατὰ κράτος ἠυξανε, grew by main force.

* Εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκβεβηκότων—ὅμως εἰσί τινες μετὰ τοσαῦτα τεκμήρια, καὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἁπάσης τὴν μαρτυρίαν, οἱ διαπιστοῦσι τοῖς γεγενημένοις, καὶ πολλοὶ οὕτως ἀβασανίστως καὶ ἀνεξετάστως, τις ἂν παρὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν μήτε πράγματα θεασαμενος, μήτε μαρτυρίας ἀξιοπίστους τούτων ἔχων ταύτην ἂν τὴν πίστιν ἐδέξατο ψυχῇ.—Chrys. tom. v. Or. 64.

Τίς οὕτως ἐμεμήνει τῶν ταῦτα ἀκουόντων ὡς ψιλοῖς ῥήμασι πιστεῦσαι περὶ πραγμάτων τοιούτων;—Ibid.

[t] *Vide* Acts xxii. 21, 22.

[u] Acts xix. 28, 34.

[v] Acts v. 28.

the sepulchre of our Lord to be sealed up, and guarded by soldiers;[w] that being masters of his body, they might by exhibiting it disprove any report that should be made about his resurrection: they had full opportunity of examining the matter to the bottom; it being fresh, and presently divulged after its being reported done; they having also all the power and authority on their side, in furtherance of the discussion of the business: we may accordingly suppose them very zealous, diligent, and active in thoroughly sifting it, and striving to detect the falsehood therein: they did so certainly; and thereto they added strict prohibitions, fierce menaces, and bloody persecutions toward the suppression thereof; yet could they not with all their industry confute it, nor by all their fury quell it:[x] Why? because it was not confutable; because truth, prosecuted with vigorous integrity and constancy, or rather supported by divine protection and blessing, is invincible. Put case there were now the like fact by so many people reported done within these two months, wherein the church and state were in like manner exceedingly concerned, and should therefore employ all their power and care to discover the truth, one would think it impossible, that, were it an imposture, it should escape detection, and being soon, with the general satisfaction of men, quite blown away and exploded: this is the fate of all falsehood, standing merely upon its own legs, and not propped by worldly power; but truth, as in the present case, is able to subsist by its own strength, especially Heaven being concerned to aid it.*

12. As also this testimony had no power to sustain it, so it used no sleight to convey itself into the persuasions of men: it did not creep in dark corners, it did not grow by clandestine whispers, it craved no blind faith of men; but with a barefaced confidence it openly proclaimed itself, appealing to the common sense of men, and provoking the world to examine it; daring all adversaries here to confront it, defying all the powers beneath to withstand it; claiming only the patronage of heaven to maintain it.[y]

13. Furthermore, the thing itself, had it been counterfeit, was in all probability apt to fall of itself; the witnesses clashing together, or relenting for their crime. That advice of Gamaliel had much reason in it; *Refrain* (saith he) *from those men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought;*[z] καταλυθήσεται, it will of itself be dissolved or destroyed: for how indeed could it be, that among so many confederates in a juggle, not one, either checked by conscience, or daunted by hazards, or wearied and worn out by sufferings, should flinch and fall off, so as to detect the plot, disavow his fault, and retire from persecution, but that each one should persist stedfast in so high a strain of vile dissimulation? If one had fallen off, he had certainly spoiled all the plot, opened all men's eyes, and prevented the faith of any one person to the story: and what cement could firmly combine such a pack of men to God, and to all the world, that they should continue invincibly stiff in their faith to one another, and constantly true to so vain a design, good to no man, worst to themselves? that, I say, twelve such persons, every one for a long time, during their whole life, should persevere immoveable in so extravagant a resolution of lying, so as by no regrets or dissatisfactions from within, no threats, no perils, no troubles or pains from without, to be ever driven out of it, but should die with it in their mouths, yea, rejoice and glory in dying for it; should dying carry it into the presence of God, and dare with it to appear at his judgment, is exceedingly strange and incredible: it must therefore surely be truth alone that could set them on this design, and could uphold them steady in it; so unanimous a consent, so clear a confidence, so firm a resolution, so insuperable a constancy and patience, nothing but a sense of truth could inspire men with, nothing but a perfectly good conscience could sustain. Possible it is, that in matters of specula-

* Οὐδεμιᾶς γὰρ δεῖται βοηθείας ἡ τῆς ἀληθείας ἰσχὺς, ἀλλὰ κἂν μυρίους ἔχῃ τοὺς σφεννύντας αὐτὴν, οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἀφανίζεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' αὐτῶν τῶν ἐπηρεάζειν ἐπιχειρούντων φαιδροτέρα καὶ ὑψηλοτέρα ἄνεισι, &c.—Chrys. tom. v. Or. 64.

[w] Matt. xxvii. 64.

[x] Acts iv. 17, 18; v. 28.

[y] 1 Thess. vi. 21.

[z] Acts v. 38.

tion and subtility, men upon slender grounds may be peremptorily opinionative, and desperately pertinacious (this experience showeth:) but in a matter of this nature, (a matter of plain fact and gross sense) none can well be imagined (none especially so qualified, in such circumstances, to such purposes can be imagined) to be so wretchedly stupid, or desperately obstinate.

14. He, then, who doubts of the sincerity of these witnesses, or rejects their testimony as incredible, must instead of it admit of divers stranger incredibilities;[a] refusing his faith to one fact, devious from the natural course of things, but very feasible to God; he must thence allow it to many others, repugnant to the nature of man, and to the course of human things; performed without God, yea against him. Is it credible, that persons otherwise through all their lives strictly blameless and rigidly virtuous (even in the more heavenly parts of goodness, in humanity, meekness, peaceableness, humility, and patience), should, against clearest dictates of conscience, peremptorily and perseveringly commit so palpable villainy, as to broach and propagate such an imposture; that they, all whose demeanours and discourses evidently did tend to the advancement of God's glory, and promoting goodness, should so in their hearts utterly defy God and detest goodness; or that persons in a strain incomparably solemn and serious should so plainly teach, so strongly press, so otherwise uniformly practice highest good-will and beneficence toward all men, while they were with all their mind and might striving to gull and abuse men? Is it conceivable, that men otherwise in all their actions so wise and well advised (able to manage and to perform so great matters), should so zealously drive on a most vain and senseless project, with more unwearied industry labouring to maintain and disperse a lie, than any men beside did ever strive in behalf of truth? Is it not marvellous, that men in all respects so impotent, without any arms or aids, should adventure on so high an enterprise, should with so happy success achieve it? that naked weakness should boldly assault, and thoroughly overpower, the greatest might; pure simplicity should contest with and baffle sharpest wit, subtlest policy, and deepest learning? that rude speech (void of strength or ornament) should effectually persuade an uncouth and unpleasant tale, against all the finest and strongest rhetoric in the world? Is it not strange, that a crew of vile and base persons should so inseparably be linked together with no other bands than deceit and dishonesty; no truth, no virtue, no common interest helping to combine or contain them together? Is it to be believed, that men of sense should *gratis*, for no considerable end or advantage, voluntarily embrace and patiently endure all that is distasteful to human nature, freely exposing themselves, they knew not why, only for the sake of a story, to the fury of earth and flames of hell; eagerly sacrificing their fortunes, credits, lives, and souls themselves, to the ghost of a forlorn wretch and infamous caitiff? Is it not, in fine, prodigious that so implausible a falsehood upon all greatest disadvantages should encounter, vanquish, and triumph over truth? These are incredibilities indeed, able to choke any man's faith: yet he that rejects this testimony must swallow and digest them, together with others like them of as hard concoction.

15. To these things we may add, that God himself did signally countenance and ratify this testimony; not only by conferring on the avowers thereof extraordinary graces (invincible courage, irresistible wisdom, indefatigable industry, inflexible constancy and patience; admirable self-denial, meekness, charity, temperance, and all virtues in an eminent degree), not only further by a wonderful success and blessing bestowed upon their endeavours; but by enduing them with supernatural gifts, and enabling them to perform miraculous works openly and frequently: *So that by the hands of the apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people, the Lord giving testimony unto the word of his grace, and granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands*; so that *with great power gave the apostle witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all*;[b]

[a] Aug. de Civ. D. xxii. 5.

[b] Acts ii. 43; v. 12; xiv. 3; xix. 11; iv. 33.

(that is, there was a great appearance of the divine favour toward them, and of the divine operations in and by them.) Yielding which kind of attestation was the ancient and usual method of God in authorizing his messengers, and approving the declaration of his mind by them (the seal, as it were, put to the *letters credential* from heaven;) nor could God afford more convincing signs than these of his approbation to any person or design: that God did thus *συνεπιμαρτυρεῖν attest*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh,[e] *together with these* witnesses, if the apostolical history (bearing in it all the characters of a simple, faithful, and upright narration) did not relate; yet the effect of this testimony, so speedily and easily prevailing everywhere, would render it highly probable, since in likelihood, no human endeavour, without divine assistance, could accomplish a business so great and difficult: if they did no miracles, *τοῦτο μέγιστον σημεῖον*, this, as St. Chrysostom says, *was the greatest miracle that could be*, that such a testimony should without any miracle prevail.*

16. Now for conclusion, all these things being considered, it is sufficiently apparent that this testimony is above all exception; that no matter of fact ever had, or well could have in any considerable respect, a more valid and certain proof: the greatest affairs in the world (concerning the rights and reputations, the estates and the lives of men) are decided by testimonies in all regards less weighty; so that to refuse it, is in effect to decline all proof by testimony, to renounce all certainty in human affairs, to remove the grounds of proceeding securely in any business, or administration of justice; to impeach all history of fabulousness, to charge all mankind with insufficiency, or extreme infidelity, (for if these persons were not able, or not honest enough, what men can ever be supposed such; who can by greater arguments assure their ability, or their integrity in reporting any thing?) to thrust God himself away from bearing credible attestation in any case (for in what case did he ever or can he be conceived to yield an attestation more full or plain, than he did in this? what further can he perform needful to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity, or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition, unreasonably and unworthily incredulous?)in fine, to distrust this testimony is therefore in effect to embrace the vanity of the most wanton or wicked sceptic.

The use of all is in short this, that we should heartily thank God for so clear and strong an assurance of the truth of our faith;[d] that we therefore firmly embrace it, and steadily persevere therein; that we obey it, and bear fruits worthy thereof in our practice; that so doing we may obtain the blissful rewards which upon those terms it propoundeth and promiseth: that we may all so do, God of his mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.[e] Amen.

The third day he rose again, &c.

SERMON XXX.

LUKE xxiv. 46.—*And he said unto them, Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.*

THE words of men leaving this world (as proceeding from a depth of serious concernedness, and influenced by a special providence) are usually attended with great regard, and a kind of veneration: these are such, even the words of our departing Lord: the which, there-

* Ἀμήχανον γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνην ἰσχὺν δυνηθῆναι τοσαῦτα ποτέ.—Chrys. in Act. i. 3; *vide* in 1 Cor. Or. 5.

Si per apostolos—ista miracula facta esse non credunt, hoc nobis unum grande miraculum est, quod ea terrarum orbis sine ullis miraculis credidit.—*Aug. de Civ. D.* xxii. 5.

[e] Heb. ii. 4.

[d] Heb. x. 23; iv. 14.

[e] Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

fore, deserve and demand our best consideration.

They respect two points of grand importance, the passion and the resurrection of our Lord; of which I shall only now consider the latter, as being most agreeable to the present season: and whereas there be divers particulars observable in them, I shall confine my Discourse to one, being the main point; couched in those words, *thus it behoved;* which import the needfulness and expediency of our Lord's resurrection: of which I shall endeavour first to declare the truth, then to show the usefulness by a practical application thereof.

The resurrection of our Lord may appear to have been needful and expedient upon several good accounts.

1. It was needful to illustrate the veracity, wisdom, and providence of God, by making good what he had signified in the ancient scriptures concerning it; neither in mystical adumbrations, or by express predictions; understood according to those infallible expositions, which the apostles did receive from the instruction of our Lord, or from illumination of that Spirit which dictated the scriptures: the particular instances, as being obvious, and requiring large discourse, I now forbear to mention.

2. It was needful in congruity to other events foretold, and in order to the accomplishment of those designs which our Lord was to manage; the whole economy and harmony of the evangelical dispensation, as it is represented by the prophets, doth require it: it was, according to their predictions, designed that Christ should erect a spiritual kingdom, and administer it for ever, with perfect equity, in great peace and prosperity; that he should in our behalf achieve glorious exploits, subduing all the adversaries of our salvation (*sin*, *death*, and *hell;*) that he should establish a new covenant, upon better promises, of another eternal most happy life, assuring to the embracers thereof an entire reconciliation and acceptance with God; that he should convert the world to faith in God, and observance of his will: in execution of these purposes, it was declared that he should undergo suffering, and be put to death in a most disgraceful and painful manner; it consequently must be supposed, that from such a death he should conspicuously and wonderfully be restored to life; how otherwise could it appear, that he did reign in glory, that he had obtained those great victories, that he had vanquished death, that the former curses were voided, God appeased, and mankind restored to favour by him? Had the grave swallowed him up, had God *left his soul in hell*, had he rested under the dominion of common mortality, had after his dismal passion no evidence of special favour toward him shone forth; what ground had there been to believe those great things? who would have been persuaded of them? The scripture, therefore, which *foretelleth the sufferings of our Lord, and the glories following them;* which saith, that *having drunk of the brook in the way, he should lift up his head;* that *when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he should prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand;* that *because he had poured out his soul unto death, God would divide him a portion with the great, and he should divide the spoil with the strong;* that *unto him whom man despised, to him whom the nation abhorred, kings should look and arise, princes should worship;*[a] the scripture, I say, foretelling these events, doth consequentially imply the needfulness of his resurrection.

3. It was requisite in itself; or in respect to the many great ends for which it serveth, and the excellent fruits which it is apt to produce: as will appear by reflecting on those which are suggested in the New Testament.

I pass by its particular usefulness in regard to our Lord's apostles and disciples; it serving to reinforce their faith, and rear their hopes, being staggered by his passions; to comfort them in those sorrowful apprehensions and despondencies of heart, which arose from the frightful events befalling him; to enlighten their minds by more perfect instruction, removing their ignorance, and reforming their mistakes concerning him and *the things of his kingdom;* to furnish them with instructions and orders requisite for managing the employments committed to

[a] 1 Pet. i. 11; Luke xxiv. 26; Psal. cx. 7; Isa. liii. 10, 12; xlix. 7.

them; to arm them by consolatory discourses and gracious promises of support against the difficulties, hazards, and troubles they were to encounter in the profession and propagation of his doctrine; in fine, by all his admirable deportment with them, and his miraculuous departure from them, to confirm them in their faith, and encourage them in their duty: these particular uses, I say, we shall pass over, insisting only upon those more common ends and effects in which ourselves and all Christians are more immediately concerned.

4. A general end of it was the production and corroboration of faith in us concerning all the doctrines of our religion; for that by it the truth of all our Lord's declarations concerning his own person, his offices, his power, his precepts and his promises (to the highest pitch of conviction and satisfaction), was assured; it being hardly possible that any miracle could be greater in itself for confirmation of the whole, or more proper for ascertaining the parts of our religion.* But more particularly;

5. First, From it the dignity of our Lord's person, and his especial dearness to God (to the voidance of all exceptions and surmises against him), did appear.

If the meanness of his birth and parentage, if the low garb and dim lustre of his life, if the bitter pains and shameful disgraces of his death (however accompanied with rare qualities shining in him, and wonderful deeds achieved by him), in persons standing at distance, casting superficial glances on things, and judging by external appearances, might breed disadvantageous apprehensions or suspicions concerning him, whether he were indeed, as he pretended, the Son of God, designed by him to be the Saviour of mankind, *the Lord of all things*,[b] the Judge of the world; the wonderful power and signal favour of God demonstrated in his resurrection, served to discuss those mists, and to correct such mistakes, evincing those temporary depressions to have been only dispensations preparatory toward his greater exaltation in dignity and apparent favour with God; *for though* (saith St. Paul) *he was crucified out of weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God*;[c] that is, although in his sufferings the infirmity of our nature assumed by him was discovered, yet by his recovering life the divine power attending him was eminently declared; it was indeed *an excessive grandeur of power, an energy of the might of strength* which God did exert *in the raising of Christ from the dead*,*[d] as the apostle laboureth to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle; and being so high an instance of power, it was consequently a special mark of favour; God not being lavish of such miracles, or wont to stretch forth his arm in behalf of any person to whom he doth not bear extraordinary regard: the which consequence also, by reflecting on the circumstances and nature of this event, will further appear.

He was persecuted and put to death as a notorious malefactor, and an enemy to God, to true religion, to the common peace, to goodness; and his being delivered up to suffer was an enforcement of that pretence; for his adversaries thence did argue, that God had disavowed and deserted him; they insulted over him, as one in a forlorn condition, *esteeming him*, as the prophets foretold, *stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*:[e] but God thus, by his own hand, undoing what they had done against him, did plainly confute their reasonings; did evidence their accusations to be false, and their surmises vain; did, in opposition to their suggestions, approve him a friend and favourite of God, a patron of truth, a maintainer of piety and peace; one meriting, because obtaining, the singular countenance and succour of God.

And if yielding our Lord over to death (which being a total incapacity of enjoying any good, doth signify an extremely bad state) might imply God's displeasure or disregard toward him (as indeed it did in a sort, he standing in our room to undergo the inflictions of Divine wrath and justice;) then, answerably, restoring him to life (which, as the foundation of enjoying any good, doth represent the best condition) must demonstrate a singular

* Μάλιστα πάντων—σημεῖον ἱκανὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀνισχυντοῦντας ἐπιστομίζειν.—Chrys. in Rom. i. 4.

[b] John vii. 24

* Ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως—ἐνέργεια τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος.

[c] 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

[d] Eph. i. 19.

[e] Isa. liii. 4; Psal. lxxi. 11; xxii. 8.

tenderness of affection, with a full approbation and acceptance of his performances: this indeed far more pregnantly doth argue favour, than that could imply displeasure; for that may happen to the best men upon other grounds, this can bear no other than a favourable interpretation.

Further, to give life doth ground that relation which is deepest in nature, and importeth most affection; whence, in the holy style, to raise up to life, is termed to beget; and *the regeneration* is put for the *resurrection*, so that it being a paternal act, signifieth a paternal regard; and thence perhaps St. Paul telleth us, that our Lord *was declared or defined to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead.*[f]

6. Secondly, by our Lord's resurrection we may be assured concerning the efficacy of his undertakings for us: for considering it we may not doubt of God's being reconciled to us, of obtaining the pardon of our sins and acceptance of our persons, of receiving all helps conducible to our sanctification, of attaining final happiness, in case we are not on our parts deficient; all those benefits by our Lord's resurrection, as a certain seal, being ratified to us, and in a manner conferred on us.

As God, in the death of our Lord, did manifest his wrath toward us, and execute his justice upon us; so in raising him thence correspondently God did express himself appeased, and his law to be satisfied; as we in his suffering were punished (*the iniquity of us all being laid upon him,*[g]) so in his resurrection we were acquitted and restored to grace; as Christ did merit the remission of our sins and the acceptance of our persons by his passion, so God did consign them to us in his resurrection; it being that formal act of grace, whereby, having sustained the brunt of God's displeasure, he was solemnly reinstated in favour, and we representatively, or virtually, in him; so that (supposing our due qualifications, and the performances requisite on our parts) we thence become completely justified, having not only a just title to what justification doth import, but a real instatement therein, confirmed by the resurrection of our Saviour, whence *he was* (saith St. Paul) *delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification;* and, *Who then* (saith the same apostle) *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again:*[h] our justification and absolution are, ye see, rather ascribed to the resurrection of Christ, than to his death; for that indeed his death was the ground of bestowing them, but his resurrection did accomplish the collation of them; for since (doth the apostle argue) God hath acknowledged satisfaction done to his justice by discharging our surety from restraint and from all further prosecution; since in a manner so notorious God hath declared his favour toward our proxy; what pretence can be alleged against us, what suspicion of displeasure can remain? Had Christ only died, we should not have been condemned, our punishment being already undergone; yet had we not been fully discharged, without that express warrant and acquittance which his rising doth imply: so again may St. Paul be understood to intimate, when he saith, *If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins:*[i] death (or that obligation to die, to which we did all for our transgressions stand devoted) was *condemned*, and judicially *abolished*, by his death; but it was executed and expunged in his resurrection; in which *trampling thereon* he crushed it to nothing; wherefore therein mankind revived, and received *the gift of immortality;* that being a clear pledge and full security, that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive: He* (saith St. Chrysostom) *by his resurrection dissolved the tyranny of death*, and *with himself raised up the whole world;** *By the pledge of his resurrection* (saith St. Ambrose) *he loosed the bands of hell;*† *Thereby* (saith St. Leo) *death received*

[f] Acts xiii. 33; Matt. xix. 28; Rom. i. 4.
[g] Isa. liii. 6.

* Διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ θανάτου τυραννίδα κατέλυσε.—Chrys. Rom. i. 4.——Τὴν οἰκουμένην ἑαυτῷ συνανέστησε.—Chrys. tom. v. Or. 85.

† Dominus suæ resurrectionis pignore vincula solvit inferni, &c.—*Ambr. ad Grat.*

[h] Rom. iv. 25; viii. 33, 34; 2 Cor. v. 15.
[i] 1 Cor. xv. 17.

its destruction, and life its beginning.[j]* Therein not only the natural body of Christ was raised, but the mystical body also, each member of his church was restored to life, being throughly rescued from the bondage of corruption, and translated into a state of immortality; so that *God* (saith St. Paul) *hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*[k]

Hence in our baptism (wherein justification and a title to eternal life are exhibited to us) as the death and burial of Christ are symbolically undergone by us; so therein also we do interpretatively rise with him; *Being* (saith St. Paul) *buried with Christ in baptism, in it we are also raised together with him;* and, *Baptism* (St. Peter telleth us, being the antitype of the passage through the flood) *doth save us by the resurrection of Christ,*[l] presented therein.

It also ministereth hopes of spiritual aid, sufficient for the sanctification of our hearts and lives; for that he who raised our Lord from a natural death, thence doth appear both able and willing to raise us from a spiritual death, or from that mortal slumber in trespasses and sins in which naturally we do lie buried, to *walk in that newness of life* to which the gospel calleth us; and in regard to which, *God* (saith St. Peter) *having raised his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning every one of us from his iniquities.*[m]

The same consequently is a sure earnest of our salvation; for, *If* (saith St. Paul) *when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*[n]

7. Thirdly, by our Lord's resurrection, the verity of his doctrines and the validity of his promises concerning the future state of men are demonstrated, in a way most cogent and most pertinent: any miracle notoriously true, doth indeed suffice to confirm any point of good doctrine;[o] but a miracle in kind, or involving the matter contested, hath a peculiar efficacy to that purpose: so did our Lord's resurrection, in way of palpable instance, with all possible evidence to sense, directly prove the possibility of our resurrection, together with all points of doctrine coherent thereto; (the substantial distinction of our soul from the body, its separate existence after the dissolution, and consequently its immortal nature, God's wise and just providence over human affairs in this state, the scrutiny and judgment of our actions hereafter, with dispensation of recompenses answerable;) those fundamental ingredients of all religion, most powerful incentives to virtue, and most effectual discouragements from vice; the which (before much liable to doubt and dispute, little seen in the darkness of natural reason, and greatly clouded in the uncertainty of common tradition), as our Lord by his doctrine first *brought into clear light,*[p] so by his resurrection he fully did show that light to be sincere and certain. Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory were all the arguments which the most careful speculation could produce, for asserting those important verities, in comparison to that one sensible experiment attesting to them: for if our Lord, a man as ourselves, did arise from the dead (his soul, which from the cross descended into the invisible mansions, returning into his body), then evidently our souls are distinct from our bodies, and capable of subsistence by themselves; then are they apt to exist perpetually; then may they be put to render an account for what is acted here, and accordingly may be dealt with. Hence may we see, that St. Paul discoursed reasonably, when he told the Athenians, that, *Now God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained,* πιστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν, *exhibiting an argument most persuasive to all, having raised him from the dead;*[q] that St. Peter also might well aver, that *God hath regenerated us to a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*[r]

* Per resurrectionem Christi et mors interitum, et vita accepit initium.—*Leo M. Ep.* 81.

[j] Heb. ii. 14; 2 Tim. i. 10; Rom. viii. 3; v. 18; vi. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 14; Morte calcata surrexit.—*Hier.* Ep. 129; 1 Cor. v. 21.

[k] Eph. ii. 5, 6; Rom. viii. 21.

[l] Coloss. ii. 13, 14; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[m] Eph. ii. 10; Rev. xx. 6; Acts iii. 26.

[n] Rom. v. 10; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[o] (John xx. 31.)

[p] 2 Tim. i. 10; Acts xxvi. 23.

[q] Acts xvii. 31.

[r] 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

Particularly the resurrection of our bodies restoring our perfect manhood to us (a point wholly new to the world, which no religion had embraced, no reason could descry), was hereby so exemplified, that considering it, we can hardly be tempted to doubt of what the gospel teacheth about it;* that he, preceding as the *firstborn from the dead*, and *the first-fruits of them which sleep*, as *our forerunner*, and *the Captain of life;* we, ἐν ἰδίῳ τάγματι, in our *due rank* and season, as *younger sons of the resurrection*,[s] as serving under his command and conduct, in resemblance and conformity to him, shall follow; so that, *If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in us, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us;* that, *If we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also* grow up *in the likeness of his resurrection;* that, *As we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;* so that God, *who raised our Lord, shall also raise us by his power;* for we cannot but allow that consequence to be reasonable, which St. Paul doth imply, when he saith, *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep through Jesus will God bring with him*, reducing them into a state conformable to his, by reunion of their body and soul.[t]

8. Fourthly, it was a designed consequence of our Lord's resurrection, that he thereby should acquire a just dominion over us; for *to this end* (saith St. Paul) *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living:*[u] by the obedience of his death he did earn that dominion, as a worthy recompense thereof; *He did by his blood purchase us* to be his subjects and servants:[v] but from his resurrection he began to possess that reward, and to enjoy his purchase; it being the first step of his advancement to that royal dignity and *preeminence over all flesh;* to which, in regard to his sufferings, God did exalt him; concerning which, before his ascension, he said to his disciples, *All power is given me in heaven and earth:*[w] on so many great accounts was our Lord's resurrection behooveful; so that it is no wonder if God took such especial care to assure its truth, and recommend its belief to us; appointing so many choice persons by their testimony to assert and inculcate it; to do so, being often expressed a main part and peculiar design of the office apostolical.[x] Nor is it strange, that to the hearty belief and ingenuous profession of this one article (it enfolding or inferring the truth of all other Christian doctrines), salvation is annexed, according to that assertion of St. Paul: *The righteousness of faith saith thus* (or this is the purport of the Christian institution) *that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*[y] Nor is it much that a consideration of this point should be so continually present to the minds of the ancient Christians, that whenever they did meet, they should be ready to salute one another with a Χριστὸς ἀνέστη, *Christ is risen;* it importing so great benefits, and producing so excellent fruits: in regard whereto St. Paul expressed his so ardent desire and high esteem of *knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection*,[z] as the most valuable of all knowledges; which having in some measure declared, I come now briefly to apply.

1. First, then, the consideration of our Lord's resurrection should strengthen our faith and quicken our hope in God, causing us firmly to believe his word, and confidently to rely upon his promises, especially those which concern our future state. God having thereby, as by a most sensible proof, against all objections of our feeble reason, demonstrated himself able, as by a most sure pledge he declared himself willing, to bestow upon us a happy immortality in gracious reward of our obedience: for seeing by so

* Credentes resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credimus, propter quos et ille obiit et resurrexit.—*Tert. de Pat.* 9.

Resurrectionem carnis per semetipsum primus initiavit.—*Cyp. Ep.* 73.

[s] Rev. i. 5; Colos. i. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 20; Acts iii. 15; v. 31; Heb. vi. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 23; Luke xx. 36; Rom. viii. 11.

[t] Rom. vi. 5; 1 Cor xv. 22, 49; vi. 14; 1 Thess. iv. 14.

[u] Rom. xiv. 9.

[v] Acts xx. 28.

[w] John. xvii. 2; Phil. ii. 9; Matt. xxviii. 18.

[x] Acts i. 22; x. 41; xiii. 31.

[y] Rom. x. 6, 9.

[z] Phil. iii. 10.

illustrious an instance God hath manifested that he is thoroughly reconcileable to sinners, that he bountifully rewardeth obedience, that death and hell are vincible, what reason can we have to distrust his fidelity, to doubt of his power, or to despair of his mercy? Surely he that was so faithful in raising our Lord from the grave, so notably rewarding his obedience and patience (in advancing him to supreme dignity and glory at his right hand), will not fail also to confer on us (walking in the footsteps of his piety) the promised inheritance of everlasting life and bliss, the never-fading crown of righteousness and glory. Surely, by this noble experiment we are clearly informed and should be fully persuaded, that nothing can destroy us, nothing can harm us, nothing can separate us from our God and our happiness; that no force, no fraud, no spite of men, or rage of hell, can finally prevail against us: what, then, reasonably can be dreadful or discouraging to us, what should be able to drive us into distrust or despair?

2. This point affordeth matter of great joy, and an obligation thereto. If the news of our Saviour's first birth were (as an angel called them) *good tidings of great joy to all people*,[a] how much more may the news concerning this second nativity of him be hugely gladsome! for in that birth he did but assume our flesh; in this he did advance it: then he began to sustain our infirmities; now he surmounted them: by his incarnation he became *subject to death*:[b] by his resurrection, death was subdued to him: at that he entered into the field, and set upon the bloody conflict with our foes; in this he returned a triumphant conqueror, having utterly vanquished and quelled them: the fury of the world, the malice of hell, the tyranny of sin, the empire of death, all of them conbined to render us miserable, he did in his resurrection perfectly triumph over: and doth it not then become us to attend his glorious victories with our joyful gratulations? is it not extremely comfortable to behold our gallant champion (the only champion of our life and welfare), after all the cruel blows which the infernal powers laid on him, after all the ghastly wounds which human madness did inflict, after he hath passed through the scorching flames of divine wrath and justice, after he had felt the sorest pangs of death, perfectly recoverd from all those distresses: standing upright, and trampling on the necks of his proud enemies?* Are not most sprightful expressions of gratitude, are not most cheerful acclamations of praise, due, from us to the invincible *Captain of our salvation*? Shall we not with great alacrity of mind contemplate the happy success of that mighty enterprise, wherein no less our welfare than his glory was concerned? Is it not a pleasure to consider ourselves so exempted from that fatal doom, to which all the human race was sentenced; to see life and immortality so springing forth upon us; to view ourselves, the children of dust and corruption, from hence in age and dignity so nigh equalled to the first-born sons of the creation?

It is said of the first disciples, that although they saw and felt our Lord risen, yet *for joy they could not believe it*;[c] so incredibly good was the news to them; excess of love and delight choked, or rather suspended their faith:† we cannot be such infidels from surprise; but let us be as faithful in our joy.

3. Great consolation surely it ought to breed in us, to consider, that by this event our redemtion is completed, and we become entirely capable of salvation: that in it a full discharge is exhibited from the guilt and from the punishment of all our sins whereof we do truly repent; that God's justice appeareth satisfied, and his anger pacified; that his countenance shineth out clearly with favour and mercy toward us; that our condemnation is reversed, our ransom is accepted, our shackles are loosed, and our prison set open; so that with full liberty, security, and hope, we may walk forward in the paths of righteousness toward our better coun-

[a] Luke ii. 10. [b] Phil. ii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 57.

* Σήμερον ἡμῶν τὰ λαμπρὰ νικητήρια γέγονε. σήμερον ἡμῶν ὁ δεσπότης τὸ κατὰ θανάτου τρόπαιον στήσας, καὶ τοῦ διαβόλου τὴν τυραννίδα καταλύσας τὴν διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ὁδὸν ἡμῖν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐχαρίσατο. Ἡ ποθεινὴ καὶ σοτήριος ἑορτὴ—ἡ τῆς εἰρήνης ὑπόθεσις, ἡ τῆς καταλλαγῆς ἀφορμὴ, ἡ τῶν πολέμων αἱρεσις, ἡ τοῦ θανάτου κατάλυσις, ἡ τοῦ διαβόλου ἧττα. —Chrys. tom. v. Or. 85.

† Quod credunt tardius, non est perfidiæ sed amoris.—*Chrys.* Serm. 81.

[c] Luke xxiv. 41.

try, the region of eternal felicity. Further,

4. This consideration should be a forcible engagement upon us to obedience and a holy life. Our Lord did by his resurrection gain a dominion over us, unto which if we do not submit, we shall be very injurious and wicked; unto which if we do not correspond by all humble observance, we shall be very ingrateful and undutiful: *He was raised to bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities;* and no less unhappy than unworthy we shall be, if we defeat that gracious purpose: it is the condition of our obtaining the happy fruits and benefits of his resurrection, that we should ourselves rise with him *unto righteousness and newness of life;*[d] by not complying therewith, we shall render his resurrection unprofitable to us, becoming unworthy and uncapable of any good advantage thereby. *Awake* (saith the apostle) *thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life;*[e] to awake from our spiritual slumber, to arise from dead works, are the terms on which Christ doth offer that eternal happy life: for as the pains and ignominies of his death will nowise avail those who are not *conformable to his death*, in *dying to sin* and *mortifying their lusts:* so will not they be concerned in the joys and glories of his resurrection, who are not *planted in the likeness thereof* by renovation of their minds and reformation of their lives; for as *he died*, so he was also *raised for us, that we should not henceforth live to ourselves, but unto him who died and rose again for us:*[f] our sins did slay him; it must be our repentance that reviveth him to us, our obedience that maketh him to live in our behalf; for Christ is not in effect risen to impenitent people: as they continue dead in trespasses and sins, as they lie buried in corruption of heart and life, so *their condemnation abideth,* and death retaineth its entire power over them; they shall not καταντᾷν εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν, *attain unto that happy resurrection*, whereof our Lord's resurrection was the pledge and pattern; so did our Lord assure in his preaching: *He* (said our Lord) *that believeth in the Son* (that is, who with a sincere, strong, and lively faith, productive of due obedience, believeth in him) *hath everlasting life;* but ὁ ἀπειθῶν, *he that disobeyeth* (or with a practical infidelity disbelieveth) *the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;* whence we may well infer with St. Paul, *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if we live after the flesh; we shall die; but if through the Spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live;*[g] that is, assuredly by obeying God's will we shall obtain, by disobedience we must forfeit, all the benefits of our Lord's resurrection.

5. Lastly, The contemplation of this point should elevate our thoughts and affections unto heaven and heavenly things, above the sordid pleasures, the fading glories, and the unstable possessions of this world; for *him we should follow whithersoever he goeth;* rising with him, not only form all sinful desires but from all inferior concernments, soaring after him in the contemplations of our mind and affections of our heart; that *although we are absent from the Lord in the body*, we may be *present with him in spirit*, having our *conversation in heaven*, and *our heart there, where our treasure is;*[h] for if our souls do still grovel on the earth, if they be closely affixed to worldly interests, deeply immersed in sensual delights, utterly *enslaved to corruption*, we do not partake of our Lord's resurrection, being quite severed from his living body, and continuing in vast distance from him: I shall therefore conclude, recommending that admonition of St. Saul: *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;* that *when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye may also appear with him in glory.*[i] Amen.

[d] Rom. xiv. 9; Acts iii. 26; Rom. vi. 4.
[e] Eph. v. 14.
[f] Phil. iii. 10; Rom. vi. 5; 2 Cor. v. 15.
[g] Phil. iii. 11; John iii. 36, 15; Rom. viii. 12, 13.
[h] Rev. xiv. 4; Eph. ii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 6; Phil. i. 23; iii. 20; Matt. vi. 21,
[i] 2 Pet. ii. 19; Rom. viii. 21; (Gal. vi. 8; Rev. iii. 1; 1 Tim. v. 6;) Col. iii. 1-4.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.[j] Amen.

He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God.

SERMON XXXI.

MARK xvi. 19.—*He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*

OUR Lord after his resurrection having consummated what was requisite to be done by him upon earth for the confirmation of our faith and the constitution of his church; having for a competent time conversed with his disciples, enlightening their minds with knowledge of the truths concerning him, and in right understanding of the scriptures relating to him; establishing their faith in immoveable conviction, inflaming their affections by pathetical discourse, comforting their minds with gracious promises against tribulations ensuing, and arming their hearts with courage and patience against all oppositions of earth and hell; directing and prescribing to them how they should proceed in the instruction of men, and conversion of the world to the belief of his doctrine, the acceptance of his overtures, the observance of his laws; furnishing them with authority, and giving them orders to attest the truth concerning him, to dispense the grace and mercy procured by him, and to promulgate the whole will of God to mankind; promising them spiritual gifts and aids (both ordinary and extraordinary), necessary or conducible either to the common edification or to the particular welfare of Christians; ordering them to collect and compact the society of faithful believers in him, which *he had purchasd with his blood;* in fine, imparting to them his effectual benediction, and a promise of continual assistance in the prosecution of those great and holy designs which he committed to their management; having, I say, accomplished all these things, which St. Mark in this verse expresseth briefly by the words μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς, *after he had spoken to them;*[a] and which St. Luke compriseth in the words ἐντειλάμενος αὐτοῖς, that is, having imparted to them all needful instructions, and imposed all fitting commands upon them; he in their presence departed away into the possession of his glorious state: *He was* (saith St. Mark in our text) *received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*

Which words of the evangelist do contain two grand points of our faith, The *ascension of our Lord to heaven*, and his *session there at God's right hand;* the right understanding and due consideration whereof [as it is now peculiarly, when the church recommendeth these points to be the subjects of our devotion most seasonable, so perpetually] is of great use for the edification of our souls and the direction of our practice: in order to which purposes, I shall endeavour to explain them, to confirm the truth of them, to show the ends and effects of them, and practically to apply them.

I. *He was received into heaven:* this is the first point, wherein we may observe the *act*, and its *term;* the *act*, ἀνελήφθη, he was assumed, or *taken up*, saith St. Mark here; ἀνεφέρετο, he was elevated, or *carried up;* and ἐπήρθη, *he was borne up*, saith St. Luke; ἐπορεύθη, *he went into heaven*,[b] saith St. Peter: which phrases do import, that he was, according to his humanity (or that his body and soul united together were), translated by the divine power into heaven; or that he as God (by the divine power immanent in him) did transfer himself as man thither; so that he both was carried and did go with a proper local motion, the term whereof was heaven.

And what is meant by *heaven*, in the proper sense adequate to this matter, may appear from other places equivalent, by which this action, or the result thereof, are expressed. It is called *ascending to his Father*, and *passing out of this*

[j] Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

[a] Acts i. 2.

[b] Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

world to his Father;[c] that is, departing hence into the place of God's more especial presence and residence; where *he*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, *appeareth to the face of God; being* (as St. Peter speaketh) *exalted to the right hand of God* (that is, to the greatest proximity, and therefore highest eminency, with God.) It is termed being *taken up into glory*, and *entering into his glory;*[d] that is, into a most glorious place and state peculiar to him; that place which St. Peter calleth μεγαλοπρεπὴς δόξα, the magnificent or *most excellent glory.* It is styled *entering* εἰς τὸ ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος, into *the most inward part behind the veil;* and into the τὰ ἅγια, the especially *holy places;* that is, into the inmost recesses of glory, inaccessible, and in degree incommunicable, to any other.[e] He is said to have *passed through the heavens* (that is, through all places inferior to the highest top of glory and felicity;) to have *ascended* ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, *over above all the heavens;* to have *become higher than the heavens,*[f] or advanced above them; by which expressions it appeareth, that the *term* of our Saviour's ascent, called *heaven* here, was that place of all places in the universe of things in situation most eminent, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most illustrious: the inmost sanctury of God's *temple* above, *not made with hands;* the most august chamber of presence in the celestial court: and whereas there are, as our Lord telleth us, *many mansions*, or apartments, in the house of God, the chief and best of them our Lord hath taken up for his residence; whereas heaven is a place of vast extent, to the utmost top thereof our Lord hath ascended, even into that φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, *inaccessible light* where *God dwelleth.*[g]

And there, as it followeth, *he sitteth at God's right hand;* the meaning of which words it is not difficult to find out; it being obvious and clear, that the state of things above, in the other blessed world, is in the scripture represented to us by that similitude which is most apt to beget in us reverence toward God, and which indeed really doth most resemble it; by the state of a king here, sitting upon his throne, being surrounded with personages of highest rank, worth, and respect; his nearest relations, his dearest favourites, the chief officers of his crown, and ministers of his affairs, there attending upon him; so that yet for distinction, some place more eminent, and signally honourable, is assigned to that person to whom the king pleaseth to declare most especial favour and regard; the which place, by custom grounded upon obvious reason, hath been of old, and continueth still, determined to the *next* place at *the right hand;*[h] (the *next* place, because nearness yieldeth opportunity for all kind of conversation and address; at *the right hand*, because that hand hath advantage for strength and activity acquired by use, and therefore hath a special aptitude to offer any thing, or to receive, as occasion doth require:) hence, for instance, of the custom among those from whom the phrase is taken, when Bathsheba, king Solomon's mother, did come unto him, it is said, *The king—sat down upon his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand;*[i] thus our Lord, as man, in regard to his perfect obedience and patience, being raised by God to the supreme pitch of favour, honour, and power with him, God having *advanced him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins;* having *superexalted him, and bestowed on him a name above all names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, must bow;* having *seated him in heavenly places above all principality, and authority, and power, and dominion, and name that is named, either in the present world, or in that which is to come;* having *committed to him all authority in heaven and upon earth, and given all things into his hand;* having *constituted him heir of all things, and subjected all things under his feet*, and *crowned him with* sovereign *glory and honour;* having, in fine, given unto him all that which in the Revelation the innumerable host of heaven acknowl-

[c] John xx. 17; xiii. 1.

[d] Ἐμφανίζεται τῷ προσώπῳ Θεοῦ. Heb. ix. 24; Acts ii. 38; v. 31; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Luke xxiv. 26.

[e] 2 Pet. i. 17; Heb. vi. 19; ix. 12; Διεληλυθέναι τοὺς οὐρανούς, Heb. iv. 14; Eph. iv. 10.

[f] Ὑψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν, Heb. vii. 26.

[g] Heb. ix. 11, 22; John xiv. 2; 1 Tim. vi. 16.

[h] Psal. cxviii. 16.

[i] 1 Kings ii. 19.

edgeth him worthy of; *power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;*[j] that is, all good and excellency conceivable in the most eminent degree, so that γίνεται ἐν πᾶσι πρωτεύων, he *in all things becometh to have the pre-eminence;* God having, I say, conferred all these pre-eminences of dignity, power, favour, and felicity upon our Saviour, is therefore said to have *seated him at his right hand; at the right hand of power*, say the Gospels; that is, so at the right hand of the Almighty Potentate, that all power is imparted to him for the governance and preservation of his church; *at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and at the right hand of the throne of God,*[k] saith the Apostle to the Hebrews; that is, so at the right hand of the Soverign King of the world, that royal dignity is communicated to him; in regard to which all honour and worship, all service and obedience, are due to him from all creatures.

Thus much plainly the whole speech, *sitting at God's right hand*, doth import; the which matter is otherwise more generally and simply expressed by being at God's right hand: *Who* (saith St. Peter) *is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him:* and, *It is Christ* (saith St. Paul) *that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God:* sometimes also our Lord is represented standing at God's right hand, as in the Revelation several times, and in the vision of St. Stephen, who *saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;*[l] the which posture doth then seem purposely assigned to him when he is represented assisting his servants, or in readiness to achieve some great work for the good of his church; but most commonly, as in our text, it is called *sitting;* the which word in ordinary use denoteth an abode, or permanency in any state: but there is, perhaps, some peculiar emphasis designed in attributing to our Lord that position; it implying the solid ground, the firm possession, the durable continuance, the undisturbed rest and quiet of that glorious condition wherein he is instated: the term *sitting* may also seem to augment the main sense; for that *sitting* is the most honourable posture, and therefore implieth to the utmost that eminency of favour and regard which our Lord enjoyeth in God's sight. It may farther also denote the nature, quality, and design of our Lord's preferment; his being constituted our ruler and our judge; *sitting* being a posture most proper and peculiar to such persons; whence this expression representeth him as seated upon a throne of majesty, or upon a tribunal of justice.*

I shall only further observe, that the attainment and settlement of our Lord in this high state is by one word frequently in scripture called his glorification: *The Spirit* (it is said) *was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified:* and, *When Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him:* and, *The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified:* and, *Now, Father* (prayeth our Saviour), *glorify me with thee, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was;*[m] that is, constitute me as mediator in glory supereminent above all creatures, accordingly as in my divine nature I was eternally with thee most gloriously happy: and, *The God of your fathers* (saith St. Peter to the Jews) *hath glorified his child Jesus, whom ye delivered up:* and, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour,*[n] saith the apostle to the Hebrews. So much for explication of these points.

II. The confirmation of them may be drawn partly from *ocular testimony*, partly from *rational deduction*, partly from *their correspondence to ancient presignifications and predictions.*

[j] Acts v. 31; Phil. ii. 9, 10; Eph. i. 20, 21; Matt. xxviii. 18; John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2; Heb. i. 2; ii. 8, 9; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rev. v. 2.

[k] Col. i. 18; Eph. i. 20; Matt. xxvi. 64; Mark xiv. 62; Luke xxii. 69; Heb. viii. 1.

[l] 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rom. viii. 34; Rev. v. 6; xiv. 1; Acts vii. 55, 56.

* Sedere judicantis est, stare pugnantis; Stephanus ergo in labore certaminis positus stantem vidit, quem adjutorem habuit; sed hunc post ascensionem Marcus sedere scribit, quia post ascensionis suæ gloriam Judex in fine videbitur.—*Leo M.*

[m] John vii. 39; xii 16, 23; xiii 32; xvii 1, 5.

[n] Acts iii. 13; Heb. ii. 9.

The ascension of our Lord toward heaven was testified by the apostles, who were eye-witnesses thereof; for βλεπόντων αὐτῶν, *they beholding, he was*, (saith St. Luke) *taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.*[o]

His arriving at the supreme pitch of glory, and sitting there, is deduced from the authority of his own word, and of his inspired disciples, the which standeth upon the same grounds with other points of Christian faith and doctrine; the which it is not seasonable now to insist upon.[p]

But it may be proper and useful to consider how they (as all other important events and performances belonging to our Saviour) were by the Holy Spirit in the ancient prophets many ways presignified and predicted: that they were so, our Lord telleth us; *Ought not Christ* (said he), *according to what the prophets had spoken, to suffer, and so to enter into his glory?* and St. Peter assureth us, that *the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories after the same:*[q] so indeed there were many signal types representing them, and many notable passages respecting them, interpreted according to analogy, with other mystical representations.

Isaac, the heir of promise, after his being devoted for sacrifice, and *received from death in a parable*, was settled in a prosperous state of life, *God being with him, and blessing him in all things.*[r] Joseph, being freed from that death to which by his envious brethren he was designed, and raised from that burial in prison into which by the Egyptian Gentiles he was cast, was advanced thence unto flourishing dignity, and established in chief authority over the king's house, and *over all the land.*[s] Which persons, as they were in other things, so may they well be conceived in these respects to have been types of our Lord's ascension and glorification. Joshua (who in name and performances was the most exact type of our Lord), being preserved from the common fate of the people, and with miraculous victory over all the accursed enemies of God's people, entering as captain of Israel into the possession of the promised land, the sure type of heaven, doth fitly represent the glorious ascension of our Lord into heaven, and his everlasting possession thereof, together with the good people which follow his conduct. The great afflictions and depressions of David, with his restoration from them into a mighty height of royal splendour and prosperity (all enemies foreign and domestic being subdued), may be also supposed to typify the same; his expressions in acknowledgment and thanksgiving for them seeming to allude hither, and to be more congruously applicable to our Lord than to himself: such for instance as those are in the 21st Psalm; *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days forever and ever: his glory is great in thy salvation; honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him: for thou hast made him most blessed for ever; thou hast made him exceedingly glad with thy countenance,*[t] &c. Enoch, having *walked with God* (that is, in constant devotion, and in faithful obedience to God's will), and having *received testimony that he pleased God, was taken unto God;*[u] thereby prefiguring the ascension of the well-beloved, *in whom God was most well pleased:* so was also the translation of *Elijah into heaven,*[v] in presence of Elisha and other his disciples, after he most zealously had served God, in declaration of his will and maintenance of his truth, a manifest prelude of our Lord's like translation, after he had been employed in the like service, though far more high and important, and performed it in a more eminent manner.

The high priest was a certain type of our Lord, and the Jewish temple a shadow of heaven, and the *holy of holies,*[w] a figure of the highest place in heaven; wherefore the high priest's sole and solemn entry once only in the year into the most holy place, after having by a bloody sacrifice made atonement *for all the transgressions of the children of Israel, and his there sprinkling the blood of the sac-*

[o] Acts i. 9.
[p] Luke xxii. 69; Matt. xxvi. 64.
[q] Luke xxiv. 25, 26; 1 Pet. i. 11.
[r] Heb. xi. 19; Gen. xxvi. 3, 12, &c.
[s] Gen. xli. 40.
[t] Psal. xxi. 4, 5, 6.
[u] Gen. v. 24; Heb. xi. 5.
[v] 2 Kings ii. 11.
[w] Heb. ix. 24.

rifice upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat[x] (the emblem of God's special presence), doth certainly prefigure our Lord's ascending into heaven, and sitting there at God's right hand; there, by representation of his merits and passion performing the office of a most holy priest and gracious mediator for us: *By his own blood* (saith the divine apostle) *he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us: He is entered, not into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*[y]

Thus were these points aptly signified: they were also predicted; for David, in the 68th Psalm, celebrating the glorious triumphs of God over the enemies of his people, and in consequence upon them his solemn entrance and seating himself in Sion, the hill *which he delighteth to dwell in* (the usual emblem of heaven), subjoineth, *Thou hast ascended on high*, (למרום to the high place of heaven), *thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them:* which words appositely suit to our Lord's triumphant ascension, after having subdued all the enemies of his church, and upon which he liberally dispensed wonderful gifts and graces to his people, and are by the unerring interpretation of St. Paul applied thereto.[z]

The ascension of our Lord seemeth also (at least according to mystical exposition reasonably grounded) to be respected in the 24th Psalm; as generally throughout, so particularly in those words, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in:* where, according to the first and more literal sense, the entrance of the ark (the symbol of our Lord himself, in whom God is most specially present, *in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily*[a]) into the temple is described: but in a second more elevate, more proper, and more full meaning, the entrance of our Lord (the true Shechinah) into heaven seemeth denoted; the doors of that temple not made with hands, into which he, *the Lord of glory*, at his ascension did enter, being indeed most truly *the everlasting doors;* and the doors of the earthly temple being only such as typifying them.

Again, the session of our Lord at God's right hand is expressly foretold by David: *The Lord* (saith he) *said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I have made thine enemies my footstool.*[b] Who but the Messias could be that Lord of David, unto whom God spake? who but he could be an eternal priest after the order of Melchizedek? Not only therefore our Lord himself expoundeth that place of the Messias, but the ancient Jews did commonly understand it to concern him; as appeareth by their tacit consent, and forbearing to contradict our Lord so interpreting it.[c]

In fine, all the prophecies, which are very many, that concern the spiritual and eternal kingdom of the Messias (his being invested with and exercising regal dignity and power over God's people for ever), do in effect declare the ascension and session of our Lord; particularly those of David; *I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion;* and, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre:* and that of Daniel; *I saw in the night visions one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him: and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*[d] So were these points foreshowed and foretold, to the manifestation of God's wisdom and the confirmation of our faith.

III. Now for the ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and his abode in heaven at God's right hand (I join them together as coincident, or subordinate), they are in the scripture declared to be chiefly these.

In general, our Lord by them was invested in the complete exercise of all the

[x] Lev. xvi. 16, 34; Exod. xxx. 10; Heb. ix. 7.
[y] Heb. ix. 14, 24; x. 12.
[z] Psal. lxviii. 18; Eph. iv. 8.
[a] Psal. xxiv. 7, 8, 9; Col. ii. 9.
[b] Psal. cx. 1.
[c] Matt. xxii. 44.
[d] Psal. ii. 6, 8; Heb. i. 5; Psal. xlv. 6; Heb. i. 8; Dan. vii. 13, 14.

offices, and in the full enjoyment of all the privileges, belonging to him as perfect Mediator, Sovereign King, High Priest, and Archprophet of God's church and people: he did initially and in part exercise those functions upon earth; and a ground of enjoying those pre-eminences he laid here; but the entire execution and possession of all, by his ascension into heaven, and in his session there, he did obtain particularly.

1. Our Lord did ascend unto, and doth reside in heaven, at the right hand of divine majesty and power, that as a king he might govern us, protecting us from all danger, relieving us in all want, delivering us from all evil; that he might subdue and destroy all the enemies of his kingdom and our salvation; the Devil with all his retinue, the world, the flesh, sin, death, and hell; whatever doth oppose his glory, his truth, his service; whatever consequently, by open violence or fraudulent practice, doth hinder our salvation: *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool;* So God by the Holy Spirit in David did speak unto him: whence St. Peter doth thus infer; *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ;*[e] that is, his being seated in that place of special eminency is an infalliable argument of his royal majesty and sovereignty: and, *This man*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool;* and accordingly, *He must* (as St. Paul saith) *reign until he hath put all his enemies under his feet.*[f] By various combats in his life, our Lord did worst and weaken his and our enemies; and in the last great battle on his cross, he did thoroughly rout and overthrow them; but by his triumphant ascension into heaven *he led captivity captive,*[g] enjoying the glory and benefit of his victory; by sitting at God's right hand and he keepeth them down in irrecoverable *subjection under his feet*, so that none of them can make any successful insurrection against him: for no power certainly shall ever be able to withstand his will and command, who sitteth at the helm of sovereignty immense and omnipotent; at that right hand which can do any thing, which wieldeth and moderateth all things every where; no fraud can elude, no secret conspiracy can escape his knowledge, who, sitting in that heavenly watch-tower of infinite wisdom and omniscience, beholdeth whatever is done, said, or thought, in all the world.

He so there with royal might protecteth us; and with royal goodness, munificence, and clemency, he doth also thence dispense grace and mercy to his faithful subjects: for all good gifts and graces bestowed on the church in general for common edification, and to each member thereof singly for its particular benefit, which are useful for *perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of Christ's body*[h] in truth, holiness, order, and peace, are expressed to proceed from our Lord's ascension: *To every one of you* (saith St. Paul) *is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;* that is, to every one of you proportionably, according to the quality of your employment, rank, or station in the church, and according to the particular exigency of your needs, as Christ in wisdom seeth fit, grace is afforded; in correspondence, addeth he, to the Psalmist's prophecy concerning our Saviour, *Having ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*[i]

Particularly in virtue or consequence of his ascension and glorification, to all true penitents and converts unto God, mercy and pardon for their sins are dispensed: that repentance should be acceptable to God, and available for attainment of mercy, our Lord did indeed merit for us by his suffering; but he effectually dispenseth it in God's name, being now instated in glory, as a noble boon of his royal clemency: *God*, (saith St. Peter) *exalted him as a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.*[j]

2. Our Saviour did ascend, and now sitteth at God's right hand, that he may,

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[e] Psal. cx. 1; Matt. xxii. ; Heb. i. 13; Acts ii. 36.

[f] Heb. x. 12, 13; 1 Cor. xv. 25.

[g] Eph. iv. 8.

[h] Eph. iv. 12.

[i] Eph. iv. 7, 8.

[j] Acts v. 31; Luke xxiv. 47.

in regard to us, there exercise his priestly function. Having in this outward tabernacle once offered up himself a pure and perfect sarifice for the expiation of our sins, he entered within the veil, into the most holy place, there presenting his blood before God himself, to the full effect of obtaining mercy for us, and restoring us to God's favour: *He is* (saith the apostle) *entered into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us:*[k] so that whenever we by our frailty do fall into sin, and do heartily by repentance turn unto God, invoking his mercy, our Lord is ready, by applying the virtue of his sacrifice, and pleading our cause with God, upon the terms of that gracious covenant purchased and ratified by his blood, to procure his mercy for us: for, *If any man sin, we have* (saith St. John) *an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is a propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world:* and, *Who* (saith St. Paul) *is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;*[l] that is, seeing our Lord hath offered a well pleasing sacrifice for our sins, and doth at God's right hand continually renew it, by presenting it unto God, and interceding with him for the effect thereof; what, supposing us qualified for mercy, can hinder us from obtaining it?

Our Lord also doth at God's right hand discharge the princely ministry of praying for us, and so interceding in our behalf as thereby to acquire from God to be conferred on us whatever is needful or conducible to our salvation: *He* (saith the apostle) *is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*[m] More particularly he, by his mediation there, doth procure for us a free access to God in devotion, a favourable reception of our petitions and services, a good success of them in the supply of all our needs; for, *Through him we have access by the spirit unto the Father:* and, *Having a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God—let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in the time of need* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews:) and, *He* (as he is represented in the Apocalypse) is that *angel of the covenant*, who *at the golden altar before God* doth *offer up the prayers of the saints, incensed* by his mediation and merits.[n]

Hence in his name and through him it is that we are enjoined to present our prayers, our thanksgivings, and all our services; *doing all, whatever we do, in the name of the Lord Jesus.*[o]

3. Again, our Lord telleth us that it was necessary he should depart hence, and enter into this glorious state, that he might there exercise his prophetical office, by imparting to us his Holy Spirit for our instruction, direction, assistance, and comfort: *Behold* (said he upon his departure) *I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with the power from on high:*[p] this he promised then to his disciples, but did not perform until his exaltation; *Being therefore* (saith St. Peter) *exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.*[q] He did not, and indeed (in consistence with the divine purpose and the designed economy of things) could not perform this until then: *It is* (said he) *expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you;*[r] *but if I depart, I will send him unto you:* that is, God, for promoting our Saviour's honour, and for the glory of his undertaking, had in his wisdom determined that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the reward of his obedience, the consequence of his triumph, the effect of his intercession above, an ornament of his royal state, a pledge of his princely munificence: it was reserved as a most rich and majestic gratuity, fit to be conferred at his coronation, then when he solemnly was

[k] Heb. x. 12; ix. 24.
[l] John ii. 1, 2; Rom. viii. 34.
[m] Heb. vii. 25.
[n] Eph. ii. 8; Heb. iv. 14; vii. 25; Rev. viii. 3.
[o] (John x. 9; xiv. 6; Rom. v. 2; Eph. iii. 12; Heb. x. 19; Eph. v. 20; John xiv. 13; xv 16; xvi. 23, 24;) Col. iii. 17.
[p] Luke xxiv. 49.
[q] Acts ii. 33.
[r] John xvi. 6.

inaugurated to sovereign dignity, and invested with power superlative: whence, *the Holy Spirit* (it is said in St. John) *was not yet* (that is, it was not yet poured forth, or bestowed in that conspicuous manner and copious measure, as God intended it should be afterwards), *because Jesus was not yet glorified:*[s] it was from Jesus being received into glory, and advanced to God's right hand, that so transcendent a boon was in God's purpose, and according to his promise, designed to come down.

4. Again, our Lord himself telleth us that he went to heaven, there *to prepare a place for* his faithful servants, to prepare *mansions* of joy and bliss *in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for ever more.*[t] He accordingly hath, as the apostle saith, entered as our πρόδρομος, *our forerunner into heaven;*[u] as an honourable harbinger, having disposed things there for our reception and entertainment; or rather, as the son and heir of that great house, he by his authority and interest there procured leave for us to enter, and reside there, or carrieth us as his retinue thither: *It is my will* (saith he) *that where I am, there should ye be also; that ye may contemplate my glory*, and consequently may partake thereof.[v] It was indeed our Lord's ascension which did unlock the gates of heaven, before shut upon us by our sins; which quenched the flaming sword, and discharged the mighty cherubim which guarded paradise from all access to men.*

The ancient fathers generally were of opinion that heaven, before our Lord's ascension, was inaccessible;† and that no man had ever set foot therein, until our Lord, by his actual ascent and ingress, did open the passage thither, and removed the bars there.‡ To prove this, they allege that of our Lord in St. John, *No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven:*[w] and the forecited place, *I go to prepare a place for you;*[x] which seemeth to imply heaven before unfit to receive men: and those places wherein our Lord affirmeth himself to be *the gate of the sheep*, and *the way to the Father:*[y] and that of the apostle to the Hebrews, concerning the patriarchs, and other good men before Christ's incarnation: *And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfect.*[z] Hither also they referred that of the Psalmist, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in:*[a] which words they interpreted to signify the gates of heaven then to have been first opened, when our Lord did ascend thither.* Joshua, a most congruous type of our Lord, leading God's people into the land of promise, did also to their sense imply our Lord's first entering into heaven. The high priest alone entering into the sanctuary, did, as they deemed, argue the same; the apostle to the Hebrews seeming much to favour their sentiment, when he saith, *Into the second* (tabernacle) *went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the people:*[b] *the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, whilst the first tabernacle was yet standing.* The same also was, say they, signified by those persons who, for offences wide of malice, were detained in the cities of refuge, and prohibited to return home until the death of the high priest, but were afterward restored *to the land of their possession;*[c] thereby, say they, being intimated, that until after our Saviour's death no man could return into paradise, his primitive home, from which

* Flammea illa rhomphæa, custos paradisi, et præsidentia foribus Cherubim Christi restincta, et reserata sunt sanguine.—*Hier.* Ep. 3.

† Οὐρανὸς ἔτι ἦν ἄβατος.—Chrys. ad Heb. ix 8.

‡ Ante Christum Abraham apud inferos, post Christum latro in paradiso, &c.—*Hier. in Epitaph. Nepot.* Ep. 3.

* Ὅταν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνέστη Χριστὸς, καὶ ἀνέβη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, κελεύονται οἱ ἐν οὐρανῷ ταχθεν- τες ἄγγελοι ἀνοῖξαι τὰς πύλας τῶν οὐρανῶν.—Just.M.

[s] John vii. 39.
[t] John xiv. 2; Psal. xvi. 11.
[u] Heb. vi. 20.
[v] John xvii. 24; xiv. 3; xii. 26.
[w] John iii. 13.
[x] John xiv. 2.
[y] John x. 7; xiv. 6.
[z] Heb. xi. 39.
[a] Psal. xxiv. 7, 9.
[b] Heb. ix. 7, 8.
[c] Numb. xxxv. 28.

man for his sin had been excluded; but that thenceforth all persons, in an evangelical account, not malicious or wicked, had a right and liberty to return thither.* Upon these and the like grounds did the Fathers commonly suppose no person before our Lord's ascension to have entered heaven; but however it were as to the time, yet assuredly, in order of nature and causality, it was he that did first ascend thither; and by virtue of his ascension it is, that any man ever did or shall ever come thither: *His blood was* (as St. Hierome saith) *the key of paradise;* the efficacy of which he carrying up with him did unlock it; so that thenceforth it doth stand wide open to those who can soar up thither, following his steps in persevering obedience.† *Having therefore* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*[d] *and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart:* and, *He, being perfected* (or consummated in his state of glory), *became to all that obey him the author of everlasting salvation; being denominated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.*[e]

5. It was indeed an effect of our Lord's ascension and glorification, that all good Christians are with him in a sort translated into heaven, and advanced into a glorious state; being thence by him *made kings and priests to God. We have* (saith Tertullian) in *Christ Jesus seized on heaven:* and the apostle saith as much: *Us,* (saith he) *who were dead in trespasses and sins, God hath quickened together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*‡ In many respects we thereby are raised to heaven and eminent glory.

We thence, even as men, become greatly dignified, our nature being so highly advanced thereby: we thereby get the honour of being brethren or kinsmen to the world's great Lord and King; so that any of us may say with St. Austin, *Where my flesh reigns, there I believe myself to reign:** hence, as the Apostle to the Hebrews teacheth us, is that of the Psalmist verified concerning man: *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands.*[f]

We also more as Christians are elevated thereby by our near relation to him, and our participation with him as our head: for where the head is, there the body is; they are inseparably connected; there can be no breach, no distance between them;† and the honour conferred on the head doth necessarily accrue to the members; according to St. Paul's rule, *If one member be glorified, all the members do rejoice with it,* or do partake of its joyful state.[g] *Christi ascensio nostra est provectio, The ascension of Christ is our preferment; and whither the glory of the head is gone before, thither likewise is the hope of the body called,* saith a devout Father.‡

We also are by our Lord's glorification advanced and advantaged, in that his being so glorified is a sure pledge and an earnest of that glorious reward which all good Christians shall receive. *Christ* being *made heir of all things,* did in his ascension *adire hæreditatem,* take possession of that inheritance;[h] and we consequently, as *coheirs* with him, and *having a share in the inheritance of the saints in light,* do seize thereon, acquiring therein a right and propriety at present, being assured in due time (if by our miscarriages we do not forfeit our title) of an actual possession thereof:[i] *As*

* Quid est quod homicida post mortem pontificis absolutus ad terram propriam redit? nisi quod humanum genus, quod peccando sibi mortem intulit, post mortem veri Sacerdotis, id est Christi peccatorum vinculis solvitur, et in paradisi possessionem reparatur.—*Greg. M. Hom. in Ezech.*

† Sanguis Christi est clavis paradisi.—*Hier.* Ep. 129.

‡ Rev. i. 6; v. 10,—Usurpavimus cœlum, et regnum Dei in Christo Jesu.—*Tert. de Resur.* c. 51.

[d] Heb. x. 19, 20. * Heb. v. 9, 10.

* Ubi caro mea regnat, ibi me regnare credo.—*Aug. Med.*

† Ἔνθεν ἡ κεφαλή, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ σῶμα· οὐδενὶ γὰρ μέσῳ διείργεται ἡ κεφαλὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα.—Chrys. in Eph. λ. 3.

‡ Christi ascensio nostra est provectio; et quo præcessit gloria capitis, eo spes vocatur et corporis.—*Leo P.*

[f] Psal. viii. 5; Heb. ii. 7. [g] 1 Cor. xii. 26.

[h] Heb. i. 2; Rom. viii. 17; Eph. i. 11.

[i] Col. i. 12.

(saith Tertullian) *Christ did leave to us the earnest of the Spirit, so he received from us the earnest of the flesh, and carried it into heaven as a pledge of the whole sum to be sometime brought in thither.**

We do also in a manner ascend with Christ to heaven, in regard that by his ascension our principal concernments, our only considerable interests (that κρείττων ὕπαρξις καὶ μένουσα, *better and enduring substance*), the true objects of our affection, and all our hope, are transferred thither;[j] whence heaven becometh our only true country, our *abiding city*, our real home: we having here no true rest, no settled mansion, no certain estate; but indeed being *strangers, sojourners, and pilgrims upon earth.*[k] Our πολίτευμα, our politic capacity, relates to heaven, or we are citizens thereof, saith St. Paul; we are *fellow-citizens of the saints, and domestics of God;* are *proselytes to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the metropolis of the saints, the heavenly Jerusalem;*[l] we are *translated into the kingdom of God's beloved Son*, are *called into his kingdom and glory*, have *our hope laid up for us in heaven*, are *dead to this world*, and *our life is hid with Christ in God:* and where we are so concerned, there especially in spirit and heart we may be supposed to be.[m]

6. I might add, that God did thus advance our Saviour, to declare the special regard he beareth to piety, righteousness, and obedience, by his so amply rewarding and highly dignifying the practice thereof. *We* (saith the apostle) *see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.*[n] We see him, not only as an object of our contemplation, but as a pattern of our practice, and as a ground of our encouragement: *Looking up* (saith that apostle again) *unto Jesus, the captain and the perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.*[o] God, it seemeth, did intend, and he doth propound, our Lord's exaltation, for an engagement and motive to us of following him in the way by which he attained it; giving us assuredly to hope for the like rewards of glory and joy, in proportion answerable to our imitation of his exemplary obedience and patience.

Such are the principal ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and session at God's right hand; the consideration of which points may have great use, and should have much influence upon our practice.

1. It may serve to guard us from divers errors, which to the dangerous prejudice and disparagement of our religion (introducing into it notions thwarting reason and sense, charging it with needless and groundless incredibilities, exposing it to difficulties and objections so massy, that the foundations of Christian truth are scarce able to support them) have been and are asserted by divers persons, or by sects of men professing Christianity, such as are that of the old Eutychians, who held, that the human nature of our Lord was converted into his divinity, or swallowed up thereby; that of the German Ubiquitaries, who say, that our Lord according to his human nature corporally doth exist everwhere; that of the Lutheran Consubstantialists, and of the Roman Transubstantiators, who affirm, that the body of our Lord is here upon earth at once present in many places (namely, in every place where the host is kept, or the eucharist is celebrated:) which assertions, by the right understanding of these points, will appear to be false. For our Lord did visibly in human shape ascend to heaven (which to do is inconsistent with the invisible, omnipresent, and immoveable nature of God), and therefore he continueth still a man; and as such he abideth in heaven, and therefore he doth not exist everywhere, or otherwhere. It is the property of a creature to have a definite existence, or to be only in one place at one

* Quemadmodum Christus nobis arrhabonem Spiritus reliquit, ita et a nobis arrhabonem carnis accepit, et vexit in cœlum pignus totius summæ illuc quandoque redigendæ.—*Tertull. de Resur.* c. 51.

[j] Heb. x. 34.

[k] Heb. xiii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 11; i. 17; 2 Cor. v. 6.

[l] Phil. iii. 20; Eph. ii. 19; Heb. xii. 22, Προσεληλύθαμεν.

[m] Colos. i. 13; 1 Thess. ii. 1, 2; Colos. i. 5; Gal. vi. 14; ii. 20; Col. iii. 3.

[n] Heb. ii. 9.

[o] Heb. xii. 2.

time; for could it be in divers places at once, it might by like reason be in any or in every place, and consequently it might be immense; nor can we conceive a thing to be at once in several distant places, without its being multiplied in essence: it especially is repugnant to the nature of a body at once to possess several places, seeing its substance and quantity do not really differ, or are inseparably combined, whence it cannot be multiplied in dimensions, answerable to many localities, without being multiplied in substance; wherefore since our Lord, as man, did by a proper local motion ascend, pass through, and enter into the heavens (being, as it is said in holy scripture, in the visible form and dimensions of his body, *taken*, *carried*, *lifted up*, *gone into heaven*, *parting* from his disciples, *going away from us*, *leaving the world* and *going to the Father;* being *where no man here can come*, *or can follow him;* being to be *no more in the world*, so that *we have him not always with us;* being there, where *we*, *being in the body*, *are absent from him;* seeing he doth now reside in heaven, which *must* (as St. Peter affirmed) *receive* (or hold) him, *until the restitution of all things;* where he constantly *appeareth in God's presence for us*, and *ever liveth to make intercession for us;* whence also we do expect, that in the like visible manner as he went, that he shall come again, *descending* (as St. Paul speaketh) *from heaven*, and *coming in the clouds of heaven*, at the last resurrection and judgment, which is therefore commonly termed his *presence* and *appearence* here;) since, I say, according to the tenor of scripture, our Lord did thus, as man, in his flesh go into heaven, and there perpetually doth abide in glory, until he shall thence return hither to judge the world, we must not suppose him to be any where corporally upon earth.[p] He is indeed every where by his Divinity present with us; he is also in his humanity present to our faith, to our memory, to our affection;* he is therein also present by mysterious representation, by spiritual efficacy, by general inspection and influence upon his church; but *in body*, as *we are absent from him*, so is he likewise separated from us; we *must depart hence*, *that we may be with him*, in the place whither *he is gone to prepare for us. Who shall ascend into heaven, to bring Christ down* thence?[q] saith St. Paul, intimating where he doth immoveably abide, in exclusion to all other places. These things (beside many other strong reasons) if we do consider, it will suffice to guard us from those rampant absurdities, which so long, with such impudence and such violence, have outbraved plain reason and sense. But to leave this, and to come to more practical applications.

2. Is Christ ascended and advanced to this glorious eminency at God's right hand? Then let us answerably behave ourselves toward him, rendering him the honour and worship, the fear and reverence, the service and obedience suitable and due to that his state. In regard hereto, all the *angels of God* are commanded *to adore him;*[r] and they willingly submit thereto, acknowledging him to deserve the highest worship: *Every creature* (it is in the Revelation) *in heaven*, *in earth*, *and under the earth*, doth in its way send up acclamations of blessing and praise unto him.[s] And shall we then refuse or neglect to do the like? we, who of all creatures in equity and gratitude are most obliged, who in reason and interest are most concerned, to honour him, as ourselves receiving most honour and advantage from his exaltation? Shall we be backward in yielding obedience to him, who is in nature so nearly related to us, and in affection so well disposed toward us; who, out of tender good-will toward us, hath undertaken this high charge, and exerciseth it with design to do us good; who therefore especially is

[p] Heb. ix. 24; iv. 14; Acts i. 2, 9, 10, 11; Luke xxiv. 50, 51; Mark xvi. 19; Matt. xxvi. 11; 1 Pet. iii. 22; John xvi. 5, 7, 10, 28; xiv. 25; xiii. 3; vii. 33, 34; viii. 21; xiii. 36; xvii. 11; 2 Cor. v. 6; Ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν δέχεσθαι, Acts iii. 21; Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24; Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 16; i. 10; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 47; Phil. i. 20; Rev. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 30; (Εἰς ἀπάντησιν Κυρίου, 1 Thess. iv. 17; (Παρουσία. Ἐπιφάνεια.

* Secundum majestatem suam, secundum providentiam, secundum ineffabilem et invisibilem gratiam implenti quod ab eo dictum est, Ecce ego vobiscum——secundum carnem vero —non semper habebitis me vobiscum.—*Aug in Joh. Tract.* 50.

[q] 2 Cor. v. 6; Phil. i. 23; 1 Thess. iv. 17; Rom. x. 6.

[r] Heb. i. 6.

[s] Rev. v. 12, 13.

pleased to sit at the helm, that he may protect us from all the enemies of our welfare, and that he may settle us in the enjoyment of happiness? Shall we dare to oppose his will, and not dread to displease him, to whom *all power in heaven and earth is given;*[t] whose will is executed by the irresistible right hand of God; who therefore can easily check us in our bad courses, and will surely chastise usfor our disobedience? We do plainly hereby incur the heinous guilt, and shall surely undergo the grievous punishment, of rebellion; this being the sentence which, refusing subjection to him, we shall one day hear and feel: *Those mine enemies, that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*[u]

3. These points do afford ground and matter of great joy and comfort to us. Have we not cause to rejoice that our Lord hath obtained so absolute and glorious a victory over all our cruel enemies? Should we not with joyful gratulation applaud the triumphs of goodness over wickedness, of charity over malice, of mercy over wrath, of life and happiness over death and misery? Is it not matter of huge satisfaction that one of our kind and kindred, who beareth toward us the bowels of a man and the affection of a brother, who hath yielded so wonderful expressions of good-will and charity toward us, who so loved us as to lay down his life for us, is raised to such preferment? Shall we not be pleased that we have so good a friend in so high place and so great power; or that he who is so willing, is also so able to do us good? Have we not great cause to acquiesce in our subjection to so just, so mild, so gracious a Governor; *the sceptre of whose kingdom is a right sceptre*, whose *yoke is easy, and burden light?* Shall we not be glad, considering that we have so merciful and so kind an intercessor always resident with God, always ready to do good offices for us at the throne of grace? Considering this, what is there that can be or happen in the world that should displease, discourage, or disturb us? What enemies should we fear, since all our enemies lie prostrate under his feet? What good can we fear to want, since all things are at his disposal, and all good is dispensed by him? What events should trouble us, since all things are managed and ordered by his good hand? Will he suffer any thing to hurt us? will he see us need any convenience? will he let us be oppressed by any mischief or distress, whose office it is and continual care to protect and succour us? Have we not, in contemplation of these things, abundant reason to comply with that precept, of *rejoicing in the Lord always?*[v] Be our case in this world what it will, considering where our Lord is, we have great cause to be cheerful, according to that injunction of our Lord, enforced by this consideration, *In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*[w]

4. The consideration of these things serveth to cherish and strengthen all kind of faith and hope in us. If the resurrection of our Saviour might beget in us a strong persuasion concerning the truth of our Lord's doctrine, and *a lively hope* of salvation from his undertakings and performances for us, his ascension and session in glory (confirmed by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities) must needs nourish, improve, and corroborate them. We cannot surely distrust the accomplishment of any promises declared by him, we cannot despair of receiving any good from him, who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of divine wisdom and divine power, thence viewing all things done here, thence ordering all things every where for the advantage of those who love him and trust in him.

It especially doth serve to quicken in us that *blessed hope*, as St. Paul calleth it, of a joyful and happy rest after the troubles and sorrows of this wretched life; *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; where the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*[x]

5. These points do likewise serve to excite and encourage our devotion: for having such a mediator in heaven, so

[t] Matt. xxviii. 18. [u] Luke xix. 27.

[v] Phil. iv. 4; iii. 1. [w] John xvi. 33.
[x] Tit. ii. 13; Heb. vi. 19.

near God's presence, so much in God's favour; having so good and sure a friend at court, having such a *Master of requests* ever ready to present up, to recommend, and to further our petitions, what should deter, what should anywise withhold us from cheerfully, upon all occasions, by him addressing ourselves to God? We may therefore, as we are exhorted by the apostle, *come to the throne of grace with boldness, that we may receive mercy, and find grace for seasonable aid.*[y] We cannot, considering this, anywise doubt of those promises being effectually made good to us: *Whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive; whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do.*[z] There is nothing which he, enjoying such power, cannot do for us; and there is nothing which he, our loving and merciful Brother, will not do, that is good for us, if we do with humble confidence apply ourselves to him for it. And what geater incitement can there be to devotion, than an assurance, so firmly grounded of fair acceptance and happy success thereof? Yea, what an extreme folly, what a huge crime is it, not to make use of such an advantage, not by so obliging an inducement to be moved to a constant practice of this so beneficial and sweet kind of duties!

6. It may encourage us to all kind of obedience, to consider what a high pitch of eternal glory and dignity our Lord hath obtained, in regard to his obedience, and as a pledge of like recompense designed to us, if we tread in his footsteps, *running the race that is set before us, and looking up unto Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God.* As God, in respect to what he should perform did offer to him so high a promotion; so doth he likewise, upon condition of our obedience to his commandments, oblige himself to put us into a like excellent and happy state: so our Lord himself declared, when he said, *I covenant to you a kingdom, as my Father covenanted to me a kingdom:* it goeth before, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations:*[a] there is the condition, faithful and constant adherence to Christ in doing and suffering; upon performance of which condition, our Lord tendereth that glorious reward of an eternal kingdom: and the divine covenant being thus effectually fulfilled unto him, doth ascertain us, that his overture will likewise be made good to us: *It is* (saith St. Paul) *a faithful saying* (that is, a word upon which we may confidently rely), *if we be dead with him* (dead to sin and vanity), *we shall also live with him* (live with him in glory and joy;[b]) *if we endure* (or persevere in obedience and patience after him), *we shall also reign with him:* and, *To him* (saith our Lord in the Revelation) *that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.*[c]

7. Lastly, the consideration of these points should elevate our thoughts and affections from these inferior things here (the vain and base things of this world) unto heavenly things; according to that of St. Paul, *If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.*[d] To the head of our body we should be joined; continually deriving sense and motion, direction and activity from him: where the master of our family is, there should our minds be, constantly attentive to his pleasure, and ready to serve him; where the city is, whose denizens we are, and where our final rest must be, there should our thoughts be, careful to observe the laws and orders, that we may enjoy the immunities and privileges thereof; in that country where only we have any good estate, or valuable concernment, there our mind should be, studying to secure and improve our interest therein:[e] our resolution should be conformable to that of the holy Psalmist, *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help. Christ is our life* (saith St. Paul;) and shall our souls be parted from our life? *Christ* (saith he again) *is our hope;* and shall our mind and hope be asunder?[f] Christ is

[y] Heb. iv. 16.
[z] Matt. xxi. 22; vii. 8; Mark xi. 24; 1 John v. 14; John xiv. 13; xv. 7; xvi. 23.
[a] Luke xxii. 29; Rev. i. 6; v 10.
[b] 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.
[c] Rev. iii. 21.
[d] Col. iii. 1.
[e] Heb. xi. 16.
[f] Psal cxxi. 1; Col. iii. 4; Gal. ii. 20; 1 Tim. i. 1; Col. i. 27.

the principal object of our love, of our trust, of our joy, of all our best affections; and shall our affections be severed from their best objects?* By his being in heaven, all our treasure becometh there; *and where our treasure is, there* (if we apprehend, and believe rightly, there naturally) *our hearts will be also:* if they be not, it is a sign we take him not for our best treasure. *We do in our bodies sojourn from the Lord*, as St. Paul saith; but in our spirits we may and should be ever present, ever conversant with him;[g] contemplating him with an eye of faith, fastening our love upon him, reposing our confidence in him, directing our prayers and thanksgivings to him; meditating upon his good laws, his gracious promises, his holy life, and his merciful performances for us. We should not, by fixing our hearts and desires upon earthly things (upon the vain delights, the sordid interests, the fallacious and empty glories, the sinful enjoyments here), nor by a dull and careless neglect of heavenly things, avert, estrange, or separate ourselves wholly from him. No: *sursum corda;* let us, unloosing our hearts from these things, and with them soaring upward, follow and adhere to our Lord; so shall we anticipate that blessed future state, so shall we assure to ourselves the possession of heaven, so here enjoying our Lord in affection, we shall hereafter obtain a perfect fruition of his glorious and blissful presence: the which, God of his mercy by his grace vouchsafe us, through the same our ever blessed Saviour; to whom be for ever all glory and praise. *Amen.*

O God, the King of glory, who hast exalted thine own Son Jesus Christ, with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us to the same place, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

* Animus est, ubi amat.

[g] 2 Cor. v. 6.

From thence He shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

SERMON XXXII.

THE REASONABLENESS AND EQUITY OF A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

ECCLES. iii. 17.—*I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked.*

THESE words are the result of a serious contemplation upon the state of human affairs and common occurrences in this world: the Royal Philosopher *having* (as he telleth us) *given his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that were done under heaven;*[a] what was the proper nature, what the just price of each thing; what real benefit or solid comfort each did afford; how every person did fare in the pursuit and success of his designs; did, after full examination and careful balancing all things, resolve upon such conclusions as these:

That no kind of undertaking here did in effect yield any considerable profit or complete satisfaction, but all in the issue did prove vain and vexatious.[b]

That no man, from his care and industry in any course of life, could promise himself any certain success, or reap answerable reward.[c]

That although between wisdom and folly (or between goodness and wickedness) there is some intrinsic difference of worth (*one excelling the other as light doth excel darkness*), yet, as to external advantages, and as to final event here, there is no great odds discernible;[d] for that events (prosperous and adverse) did appear to fall out, not according to the qualifications or to the practices of men, but indifferently, according to the swing of *time and chance;*[e] and for that death and oblivion alike do seize upon all; so that apparently, in that respect, *a man hath no pre-eminence over a beast.*[f]

[a] Eccles. i. 13.
[b] Eccles. i. 8; ii. 11.
[c] Eccles. ii. 11; ix. 11; xi. 6.
[d] Eccles. ii. 13.
[e] Eccles. ii. 15; vii. 15; ix. 1, 11.
[f] Eccles. ii. 16; iii. 19.

That in common life nothing doth appear better, than for a man, with the best advantage he can, to enjoy ordinary sensible delights and comforts, which his condition doth afford.[g]

That in regard to the present things here, life were not desirable to any man, the inconveniences and troubles thereof outweighing its benefits; so that even the wisest, greatest, and happiest persons (such as he himself was), had cause *to hate life, and all their labour which they had taken under the sun.*[h]

That the mind and affection of God toward men are very reserved; the course of Providence very abstruse, the reason of events unsearchable to the wit or study of men; so that we can hardly from appearances here descry any conspicuous marks of God's favour or his displeasure.[i]

From these observations, as from so many arguments, he doth both here and otherwhere in several places of this book infer, that there shall be a divine judgment passing upon all men, both righteous and wicked;[j] whereby these seeming incongruities in the providential administration of things shall be salved; and in regard whereto our present opinions of things may be rectified: this he interposeth here; *I said in my heart* (that is, by the consideration of things I was persuaded), *that God shall judge the righteous and the wicked:* this he every now and then toucheth, as incident to his meditations: this he in the close of all proposeth as the grand inducement to piety, and obedience to God's commandments; *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.*[k]

This judgment he expresseth indefinitely, so as not to determine the kind or time thereof; and as to the absolute force of his words, it may signify the decree of God, to reward or punish men here in this life, according to their deserts, the which in holy scripture is commonly styled God's judgment; but the force of his arguments (or at least of some of them) plainly doth infer a future judgment after death; and so therefore I shall take his sense to be, grounding thereon this observation, That from a wise consideration of human affairs, and obvious events here, we may collect the reasonableness, the equity, the expediency, the moral or prudential necessity of a future judgment, according to which men shall receive due recompenses, answerable to their demeanour in this life: this observation it shall be my endeavour by God's help to declare, and prove by arguments deduced from the reason and nature of things.

First then, I say, it is reasonable and equal that there should be a future judgment: this will appear upon many accounts.

1. Seeing all men come hither without any knowledge or choice, having their life, as it were, obtruded on them; and seeing ordinarily) according to the general complaints of men) the pains of this life do overbalance its pleasures; so that it seemeth, in regard to what men find here, a punishment to be borne;* it seemeth also thence equal that men should be put into a capacity, upon their good behaviour in this troublesome state, of a better state hereafter, in compensation for what they endure here; otherwise God might seem not to have dealt fairly with his creatures;[l] and we might have some colour to expostulate with Job, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul? Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?*[m]

2. Seeing man is endued with a free choice and power over his actions, and thence by a good or bad use thereof is capable of deserving well or ill, it is just that a respective difference be made, according to due estimation; and that men answerably should be proceeded with either here or hereafter, reaping the fruits of what they voluntarily did sow. There is a natural relation between merits and rewards, which must come under taxa-

[g] Eccles. ii. 24; iii. 12; v. 18; viii. 15; xi. 10.
[h] Eccles. iv. 2, 3; ii. 17, 18.
[i] Eccles. iii. 11; viii. 17; xi. 5.
[j] Eccles. xi. 9; xii. 14; v. 8; viii. 12; vii. 18.
[k] Eccles xii. 14.

* Vitam non mehercule quisquam accepisset, nisi daretur inscius.—*Sen ad Marc.* 22.
Nemini contigit impune nasci.—*Ibid.* 15.
[l] Eccles. iv. 3, 4; ii. 17; Job iii. 3; xv. 10; Jer. xx. 14, &c.
[m] Job iii. 20, 21.

tion, and find effect, otherwise there would be no such thing as justice and injustice in the world.[n]

3. Seeing there is a natural subordination of man to God, as of a creature to his Maker, as of a subject or servant to his lord, as of a client or dependant to his patron, protector, and benefactor, whence correspondent obligations do result; it is just that men should be accountable for the performance, and for the violation or neglect of them; so as accordingly either to receive approbation, or to be obliged to render satisfaction; respectively as they have done right, and paid respect to God, or as they have offered to wrong and dishonour him; otherwise those relations would seem vain and idle.

4. Seeing also there are natural relations of men to one another, and frequent transactions between them, founding several duties of humanity and justice; the which may be observed or transgressed; so that some men shall do, and others suffer much injury, without any possible redress from otherwhere; it is fit that a reference of such cases should be made to the common Patron of right, and that by him they should be so decided, that due amends should be made to one party, and fit correction inflicted on the other; according to that of St. Paul, *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, in the revelation of our Lord Jesus.*[o]

5. Whereas also there are many secret good actions, many inward good dispositions, good wishes, and good purposes, unto which here no honour, no profit, no pleasure, no sort of benefit, is annexed, or indeed well can be (they being indiscernible to men;) there are likewise many bad practices and designs concealed, or disguised, so as necessarily to pass away without any check, any disgrace, any damage or chastisement here; it is most equal that hereafter both these kinds should be disclosed, and obtain answerable recompense.

6. There are also persons whom, although committing grievous wrong, oppression, and other heinous misdemeanours, offensive to God and man, yet, by reason of the inviolable sacredness of their authority, or because of their uncontrollable power, no justice here can reach, nor punishment can touch; who therefore should be reserved to the impartial and irresistible judgment of God; and fit it is, that (for satisfaction of justice, and distinction of such, from those who contrariwise behave themselves well) a Tophet should be prepared for them.[p]

7. Upon these and the like accounts, equity requireth that a judgment should pass upon the deeds of men; and thereto the common opinions of men and the private dictates of each man's conscience do attest: for all men seeing any person to demean himself brutishly and unworthily, committing heinous disorders and outrages, are apt to pronounce it unfit that such an one should escape with impunity; likewise when innocent and good persons (who do no harm, and do what good they can) do suffer, or do enjoy no benefit thence, it is a pity, will any indifferent person be ready to say, that such a man's case should not be considered; that some reparation or some reward should not be allotted to him: the which apprehensions of men are in effect the verdicts of common sense concerning the equity of a judgment to be.

8. Every man also having committed any notable misdemeanour (repugnant to piety, justice, or sobriety), doth naturally accuse himself for it, doth in his heart sentence himself to deserve punishment, and doth stand possessed with a dread thereof; so, even unwillingly, avouching the equity of a judgment, and by a forcible instinct presaging it to come. As likewise he that hath performed any virtuous or honest action, doth not only rest satisfied therein, but hath raised in him a strong hope of benefit to come from heaven in recompense thereof; the which apprehensions and hopes do involve an opinion that it is reasonable a judgment should be. All which considerations (seeing it is manifest that there is not generally or frequently any such exact judgment or dispensations of rewards in this life, nor perhaps, without changing the whole frame of things and course of Providence, can well be) do therefore infer the fitness and equity of a future judgment.

It is further, upon divers accounts, re-

[n] Job iv. 8; Prov. xxii. 8; Jer. xxxii. 19.
[o] 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.
[p] Isa. xxx. 33.

quisite and needful, that men should have an apprehension concerning such a judgment appointed by God, and consequently that such an one should really be. It is requisite toward the good conduct of human affairs here, or to engage men to the practice of virtue; it is necessary to the maintaining any belief concerning religion, or sense of piety: without it, therefore, no convenient society among men can be well upheld.

1. It is, I say, needful to engage men upon the practice of any virtue, and to restrain them from any vice; for that indeed without it, no consideration of reason, no provision of law here, can be much available to those purposes. He that will consider the nature of men, or observe their common practice (marking what apprehensions usually steer them, what inclinations sway them, in their elections and pursuits of things), shall, I suppose, find, that from an invincible principle of self-love, or sensuality, deriving itself through all their motions of soul, and into all their actions of life, men generally do so strongly propend to the enjoyments of present sensible goods, that nothing but a presumption of some considerable benefit to be obtained by abstinence from them, or of some grievous mischief consequent on the embracing them, can withhold them from pursuing such enjoyment. From hence (seeing fancy, reason, and experience do all prompt men to a foresight of events, and force them to some regard of the consequences of things) it followeth that hope and fear are the main springs which set on work all the wheels of human action; so that any matter being propounded, if men can hope that it will yield pleasant or profitable (that is, tending to pleasant) fruits, they will undertake it; if they do fear its consequences will be distasteful or hurtful, they will decline it: very rare it is to find, that the love or liking of a thing, as in itself amiable to the mind, or suitable to reason, doth incline men thereto; that honest things, bare of present advantages, and barren of hopeful fruits, are heartily pursued; that any thing otherwise averteth us from itself, than as immediately presenting some mischief, or dangerously threatening it. When goodness therefore doth clash with interest or pleasure, *human wisdom* (the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *natural sense of the flesh*, which St. Paul speaketh of as opposite to virtue) will dispose men to take part with these;[q] and except some higher aid come in to succour goodness, it is odds that ever they will prevail over it. If it do appear that virtue can pay men well for their pains, they perhaps may be her servants; but they will hardly wait on her in pure courtesy, or work in her service for nothing; if she bringeth visibly a good dowry with her, she may be courted; but her mere beauty, or worth, will draw few suitors to her: who will forego sensible pleasures, or waive substantial profit; who will reject the overtures of power or honour for her sake? And if vice, how ill soever it look or leer, do offer fairly, how many persons will be so nice or squeamish, as merely out of fancy, or in despite to her, to refuse or renounce her? In short, as men are baited with pleasure or bribed with profit, so they pursue; as they are stung with pain or curbed with fear, so they eschew things; it is a gift (or a specious appearance of some good offered) which perpetually moveth the greatest part, which often *blindeth the eyes and perverteth the heart* of the wisest sort of men.[r]

It is further to common sense very obvious, that this life cannot promise or afford to virtue any rewards apparently so considerable, as in the common judgment of men to overpoise the pains and difficulties required to the procurement and maintenance thereof (the pains and difficulties to be overgone in mastering stubborn inclinations, in moderating greedy appetites, in restraining violent passions, in encountering frequent and strong temptations, in abstracting our minds and affections from sensible things, in assiduous watching over our thoughts, words, and actions), together with the manifold inconveniences, crosses and troubles, which do attend the strict practice of virtue; that likewise here there are not ordinarily any such discouragements affixed to vice, which do much weigh down the pleasures with which it is tempered, and the advantages waiting on it.

As for human laws, made to encourage and requite virtue, or to check and chastise vice, it is also manifest that they do

[q] Rom. viii. 6.

[r] Deut. xvi. 19; Exod. xxiii. 8.

extend to cases in comparison very few; and that even as to particulars which they touch, they are so easily eluded, or evaded, that without entrenching upon them, at least without incurring their edge, or coming within the verge of their correction, men may be very bad in themselves, extremely injurious to their neighbours, and hugely troublesome to the world; so that such laws hardly can make tolerable citizens, much less thoroughly good men, even in exterior demeanour and dealing. However, no laws of men can touch internal acts of virtue or vice; they may sometimes bind our hands, or bridle our mouths, or shackle our feet; but they cannot stop our thoughts, they cannot still our passions, they cannot bend or break our inclinations: these things are beyond the reach of their cognizance, of their command, of their compulsion, or their correction: they cannot therefore render men truly good, or hinder them from being bad.

Upon which and the like considerations it is plain enough, that, setting aside the persuasion of a future judgment, all other incentives to virtue and restraints from vice, which either common experience suggesteth, or philosophical speculation may devise, are very weak and faint, and cannot reasonably promise considerable effect: the native beauty and intrinsic worth of virtue, or its suitableness to reason and the dignity of our nature; the grace and commendation with which it decketh the practisers of it; its goodly, pleasant, and wholesome fruits of manifold conveniences, of health to soul and body, of peace and amity among men, of tranquillity and satisfaction in mind, if they do not reach beyond this transitory life, cannot to the common apprehensions of men appear so considerable, or prove so efficacious, as to engage men closely and constantly to adhere thereto. Neither will the worst of evils innate or accessory to vice (its essential deformity and turpitude, or its being disagreeable to reason and dishonourable to human nature, together with the distempers, the damages, the disgraces, the disturbances apt to sprout from it), if no more hereafter is to be feared in consequence thereof, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from it: the peril of death itself (the worst evil which men pretend to inflict, and that which our nature seemeth most to abhor) will not import much toward the diverting indigent, ambitious, or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts. It is the observation of Cicero, from which he inferreth the need of supposing future punishments, as the only effectual restraints from such actions: *That* (saith he) *there might be in this life some fear laid upon wicked men, those ancients did think good that there should be some punishments appointed in hell for impious persons; because indeed they understood, that, setting these apart, death itself was not to be feared.**

There have been indeed vented such fine and stately notions as these:[s] that reason simply, however attended, doth challenge obedience to itself; that virtue is abundantly its own reward, and vice a complete punishment to itself;[t] that we should not in our practice be mercenary, regarding what profit or detriment will accrue from it, but should be good absolutely and gratis; that moral goods are the only desirable goods, and moral evils the only evils to be grieved at; that nothing can happen amiss to good men, and whatever their condition is, they are perfectly happy; that nothing can truly benefit ill men, or exempt them from misery: but these, and the like notions, frequently occurring in philosophers, as they are (being rightly understood, or taken in a qualified sense), supposing religion and a future judgment, evidently reasonable and true † (as also perhaps, even abstracting from that supposition, they may have in them a kind of slim and dusky truth, discernible to one in a thousand, who is very sharp-sighted, and looketh most wistly on them; as they may be relished by a few person of very refined spirit, or of special improvement;) so to the common herd of people (unto whose

* Ut aliqua in vita formido improbis esset, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt, quod videlicet intelligebant his remotis non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam.—*Cic. Catil.* 4.

† Neque bona, neque mala, quæ vulgus putet; multos qui conflictari adversis videantur beatos, ac plerosque quanquam magnas per opes miserrimos, si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerent, hi prospera inconsulte utantur. —*Tac. Ann.* 6.

[s] Cic. de Fin. iii. Tusc. 5.

[t] Cic. de Leg. 1; Sen. de Clem. i. 1.

inclinations and capacities it is fit that the general rules of practice, and the most effectual inducements thereto, should be squared), to men immersed in the cares, the toils, and the temptations of the world, they plainly are unsuitable; their grosser conceit cannot apprehend, their more rugged disposition will not admit such fine notions; they, in effect, by the generality of men, have been slighted and exploded, as incongruous to common sense and experience, as the dictates of affectation or simplicity; as the dreams of idle persons, addicted to speculation, and regardless of the world, such as it really doth exist, and will ever persist, while men continue endued with the same natural inclinations and affections: so that from such notions little succour can be expected toward promoting virtue, or restraining vice in the world.

Upon these considerations the necessity or great usefulness of supposing a judgment doth appear; that it being cast into the scales may, to the common understanding of men, evidently render virtue more considerable and eligible than vice; as even in consequential profit and pleasure far surpassing it.

2. Whence manifestly the same supposition is also needful for the welfare of human society; the which, without the practice of justice, fidelity, and other virtues, can hardly subsist;* without which practice, indeed, a body of men would be worse than a company of wolves or foxes; and vain it were to think, that it can any where stand without conscience; and conscience, without fear checking, or hope spurring it on, can be no more than a name: all societies, therefore, we may see, have been fain to call in the notion of a future judgment to the aid of justice, and support of fidelity; obliging men to bind their testimonies by oaths, and plight their troth by sacraments; implying a dread of that divine judgment to which they solemnly do then appeal and make themselves accountable.

3. But further, the persuasion concerning a future judgment is, upon peculiar accounts, most requisite to the support of religion and defence of piety.

It is certain, that no authority, upon whatever reason or equity grounded, if it do not present competent encouragements to obedient subjects, if it do not hold forth an armed hand, menacing chastisement to the refractory, will signify any thing, or be able to sustain the respect due to it; that no laws, however in themselves equal or commodious, if a certain account or trial, backed with a dispensation of valuable rewards and infliction of formidable punishments, be not annexed to them, will obtain any force, so as to be observed or regarded; that no obligation whatever, of duty or gratitude, will prevail upon men, if they de not apprehend themselves under a constraint to render an account, so as to be forced either to do reason, or to suffer for not doing it. So it is generally: and so it is even in regard to God, the sovereign King and Governor of the world, as piety doth suppose him: his authority will never be maintained, his laws will never be obeyed, the duties towards him will never be minded, without influence upon the hopes and fears of men; they will not yield to him any reverence, they will nowise regard his commands, if they may not from their respect and obedience expect good benefit, if they dread not a sore vengeance for their rebellion or neglect; nothing to them will seem more fond, than to serve him who doth not well requite for the performance, than to revere him who doth not soundly punish for the neglect of his service.

Forasmuch also as piety doth require duties somewhat high and hard, as much crossing the natural inclinations and desires of men, it peculiarly, for the overruling such aversion, doth need answerably great encouragements to the practice, and determents from the transgression, of what it requireth; upon which score it may also further appear, that temporal judgments, and recompenses here, are not sufficient to procure a due obedience to the laws of piety; for how indeed can he, that for the sake of piety doth undergo disgrace, loss, or pain, expect to be satisfied here? What other benefits can he presume upon beside those which he doth presently forfeit?

Of this particular God may seem de-

* Deos agere curam rerum humanarum, ex usu vitæ est; pœnasque maleficii, aliquando seras, nunquam autem irritas esse, &c.—*Plin.* xi. 7.

signedly to have set before us a pregnant instance or experiment worthy our consideration: God in a very notorious and affecting manner declared his will and law to the Jews; and, to engage them to obedience, he not only recommended it to them as very good in itself, and very convenient for them to observe; but he enforced it with promises of the greatest blessings concerning this life, that men are capable of, if they should obey; and with curses or menaces of the most dismal mischiefs imaginable in reference to this life in case of disobedience; and that he both could and would in both respects make his word good, he did by miraculous dispensation of signal mercies and judgments most evidently show and assure them: yet what was the effect? it was, that, as the Psalmist expresseth it, *They despised the pleasant land—and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord: their heart was not right with God, neither were they steadfast in his covenant: they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies*:[u] they did not so value those benefits, they could not so dread those penalties, as in regard to them to persist for any time in a steady obedience; as not easily in despite of them to be drawn into the worst of crimes prohibited to them: the sweetest enjoyment of those good things could not hold them close to their duty, nor was the saddest smart of those evils able to reclaim them from sin; but even that very people (we may further observe) having afterward (by sparks of light darted from the prophets, or otherwise) obtained some clearer notions and stronger persuasions concerning a future state, and rewards dispensed therein of higher considerations than any temporal ones here, became thereupon very constant and resolute in observance of their law; they proved valiant and fierce in defence thereof; they chose rather to endure the most grievous afflictions than to transgress it; as the history of the Maccabees doth inform us: they, as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarked of them, *waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens: they* also *were tortured, not accepting a deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection*:[v] this hope it was, which then did raise them to so vigorous resolutions, and so cheerful patience: from the same apostle we also learn, that it was a sense of our being here in a transitory state, and *having an eye to the recompense of reward* after this life, which did engage the good patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament so readily upon all occasions to comply with God's will, and to perform the most difficult commands by him imposed on them:[w] these things they did, *not* (saith the apostle) *having* indeed *received the promises* (that is, not having the avangelical promises concerning a future life in so formal and express a manner as we now have, proposed to them), *but* yet *having seen them afar off, and having been persuaded of them, and having embraced them, and having* (in declaration of those perceptions and persuasions) *confessed that they were strangers, and pilgrims upon earth.*[x]

The like observation might be made even concerning the pagans, who, while the persuasions concerning judgments and rewards after this life were retained in common vogue, did live more innocently and virtuously; but after those generally were discarded, so that the satirist could say, that *scarce boys did believe any ghost or subterraneous judicatures*,* then did all wickedness mainly prevail and overflow. Comparing which things we may discern, as the weakness of considerations merely regarding this present life, so the force of those which concern a future state, in order to the procuring obedience to God's law; supposing both entertained with the same faith or persuasion of mind: from whence the necessity of that judgment which we speak of, toward the maintenance of piety, doth appear.

But beyond these things this point is very needful, to secure the very foundations of all religion and piety, the existence of God, and his providence over human affairs: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof, and of a providence over us, apt to engage or encourage us to religious per-

[u] Psal. cvi. 24, 25; lxxviii. 37, 56.

* Esse aliquos manes, et subterranean regna—
Vix pueri credunt. *Juv. Sat.* ii.

[v] 2 Mac. vi. 26; vii. 23, 29; Heb. xi. 34, 35.
[w] Heb. xi. 26. [x] Heb. xi. 13.

formances, without supposition of a judgment, and of a dispensation according to it of future rewards, cannot be well maintained;* the objections assailing them would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, were we not furnished with this good shield to receive and repel them.

To find that of the preacher certified by experience: *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him. All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that sweareth not.*[y]

To behold virtue grovelling on the ground and trampled on; while vice is mounted on the perch, and sitteth proudly domineering;[z] to view innocence and right sadly groaning under oppression, while fraud and violence do triumph and insult; which sights are obvious in the world; as the Preacher observed: *I saw* (said he) *under the sun, the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there: I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed: on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter:*[a] so did Job also take notice, when he said, *The tabernacles of the robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure:* and the Psalmist complained of wicked oppressors, *They are enclosed in their own fat*, and *with their mouth they speak proudly:* and the prophet Malachi, *Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness, are set up; yea, they that tempt God are delivered.*[b]

To observe it frequently to happen, that most innocent and virtuous persons do conflict all their days with hardships and crosses, and sometime after all die sadly in pain, and under ignominy; while persons most outrageous in lewdness and iniquity do flourish and rant it out in a long and undisturbed course of prosperity, and in the end depart hence fairly and quietly; according to that in Ecclesiastes:[c] *There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in wickedness;* the former was the case of Socrates, of Phocion, of Regulus, of many other remarkably gallant and worthy persons; the latter, as Cicero observed, of Dionysius, who, after thirty years of unjust and cruel domination, in much splendour, died quietly in his bed.*

Thus, I say, to see and consider, that commonly *to just men it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, and to wicked men according to the work of the righteous*, as the Preacher speaketh;[d] that here piety with its best friends do suffer deeply, and impiety with its worst abettors do notably thrive; yea, that not only good men suffer, but often suffer for being good (from envy and malignity of men that hate goodness), and that bad men not only prosper, but prosper by their wickedness (by their fraud and violence), hath been a huge scandal to religion, which hath caused many to stumble, hath cast some quite down into the gulf of atheism or epicurism;† hath brought some men to doubt, hath induced others flatly to deny, that there is a God (that is, a most wise, powerful, just, and good Being, every where present) or that he being, doth preside over, or any wise concern himself in our affairs. From this source did flow all those impious conceits, which Seneca thus expresseth:[e] *One objecteth to the gods neglect of us; another, iniquity; another casts them out beyond his world, and leaves them for-*

* Τὸ ῥᾶστον εἶπας, αἰτιάσασθαι θεούς.—Eurip. Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adspicerem, lætosque diu florere nocentes,
Versarique pios, rursus labefacta cadebat
Religio, &c. *Claud. in Ruff.* 1, init.

[y] Eccles. ix. 1, 2. [z] Eccles. x. 4.

[a] Eccles. iii. 16; iv. 1.

[b] Job xii. 7; Psal. xvii. 10; Mal. iii. 15.

* Dies deficiat si velim numerare, quibus bonis male evenerit, nec minus si commemorem, quibus improbis optime.—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* 3.

Dionysius 30 annos tyrannus fuit opulentissimæ et beatissimæ civitatis—atque in suo lectulo mortuus.—*Cic.* ib.

† Improborum prosperitates, secundæque res redarguunt (ut Diogenes dicebat) vim omnem Deorum et potestatem.—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.*

Ἦ χρὴ μηκέθ' ἡγεῖσθαι θεοὺς, εἰ ταῦδικ' ἔσται τῆς δίκης ὑπέρτερα.—Eurip. Elect.

[c] Eccles. vii. 15.

[d] Eccles. viii. 14.

[e] *Vide* Luc. in Jup. Confut. Plut. de Placitis, &c.; Plin. xi. 7.

*lorn, as lazy and dull, without any light, or any work.** From hence it hath been, that in all places and times there have been persons ready to say with those in the Psalms, *How doth God know? is there knowledge in the Most High? The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it: God hath forgotten; he hideth his face, and will never see it.*[f]

And not only upon blind pagans and porfane persons, but even upon the most pious of God's people, these considerations have made impression,† extorting from their hearts and mouths expostulations like that of Jeremiah: *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?*[g] and that of Job, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, and are mighty in power? their seed is established in their sight, their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them—they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave:*[h] and that, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hand, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?*[i] Such questions did this kind of observations draw forth, and it shrewdly tempted them to a dissatisfaction in their pious practice, that they were ready to say with the Psalmist, *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency;* or with those in the prophet, *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord?* so that hence, *their feet were almost gone, and their steps had well nigh slipped* into a distrust of God's wise and just providence;[j] they were moved to suspect that God did not indeed bear that special regard to goodness, and affection to good men, that great hatred of iniquity, and displeasure toward the lovers of it, which religion supposeth, as the main grounds of piety: thus, I say, have men, both good and bad, upon such occasions been induced or tempted to doubt concerning those fundamental points; and that not without apparently weighty cause, admitting that all accounts are made up here in this life between God and men; or that there is no reckoning behind, to be adjusted in another world by divine justice and goodness: then indeed that saying, it is *a reproach to the Deity that bad men do prosper*,* and good men suffer, hath a plausible semblance of truth: then he that affirmed *there was no God, and heaven to be a void place, proving his assertion hence, that while he thus affirmed, he found himself in a good case*,† did argue smartly: then Diagoras, from an unpunished perjury, collected probably that God did not exist, or did not mind what was done here; for that being, and regarding things, he would not have endured himself to be so affornted, and those under his care so abused:‡ then had Dionysius some reason to justify his sacrilege by his prosperous navigation from committing it; and with fair colour Diogenes might say, that Harpalus's successful treachery and rapine did *testimonium dicere adversos deos, bear testimony against the gods*, as guilty of injustice or carelessness: these sort of discourses would, I say, upon excluding the supposition of future judgment, have some validity, or speciousness: and for want of that supposition we may observe the apologies for Providence, elaborately composed by some philosophers, to be very lame and unsatisfactory. But supposing a judgment hereafter designed by God, and a proceeding with all men according thereto, all difficulty in these cases vanisheth, all objections have plainly no moment or force: then God's present connivance, or patient indulgence toward wicked men, will signify no more than

* Alius illis objicit negligentiam nostri, alius iniquitatem; alius illos extra mundum suum projicit, et ignavos hebetesque illos sine luce, sine ullo opere destituit.—*Sen. de Benef.* vii. 31.

† Quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique sectam eorum æmulantur, diversos reperies; ac multis insitam opinionem non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines Diis curæ; ideo creberrima et tristia in bonos, læta apud deteriores esse.—*Tac. An.* 6.

[f] Psal. lxxiii. 11; xciv. 7; x. 11.

[g] Jer. xii. 1.

[h] Job xxi. 7.

[i] Job. x. 3.

[j] Psal. lxxiii. 13; Mal. iii. 14; Psal. lxxiii. 2.

* Θεῶν ὄνειδος τοὺς κακοὺς εὐδαιμονεῖν.

† Nullos esse Deos, inane cœlum,
Affirmat Selius, probatque quod se
Factum, dum negat hæc, videt beatum.
Mart. iv. 20.

‡ ——Sunt nobis nulla profecto
Numina, cum cœlo rapiantur secula casu
Mentimur regnare Jovem, &c.
Luc. vii. 445.

what most becometh him as God and governor of the world; his most excellent goodness and admirable clemency toward his creatures and subjects; in *waiting to be gracious*, and providing for their return to a better mind;[k] affording them time and means of reforming their minds and manners, that so they may escape the stroke of final vengeance: so in most cases; and in some also signifying his wise justice, in suffering bad men to proceed forward to an inexcusable pitch of guilt, in order to their more clearly just condemnation and severe punishment hereafter; that being καταρτισμένοι εἰς ἀπώλειαν, *thoroughly fit*, as St. Paul speaketh, or ripe *for perdition;* being *prepared*, as the prophet Jeremiah expresseth it, or *sanctified for the slaughter;*[l] being by their present ease and abused prosperity become fat and fair, they may fall more proper victims to divine severity.*

Then also, from God's permitting good men to suffer, how smartly soever, nothing can be inferred prejudical unto divine goodness or justice; since they are thereby made fitter for, and do attain a surer title to, those excellent rewards, which he upon such trial and approbation of their virtues doth intend to confer upon them;† especially considering that afflictions are necessary, both as means of rendering men good, and as occasions of expressing their goodness, that scarce any virtue could subsist or could appear without them.‡

There could be no such thing as patience, if there were no adversities to be endured;[m] no such thing as contentedness, if there were no wants to be felt; no such thing as industry, if there were no pains to be taken; no such thing as humility, if sensible infirmities and crosses did not prompt us to sober thoughts, and show us what we are.* There would be no true wisdom, no clear knowledge of ourselves, or right judgment of things, without experiencing the worst half of things. We should never learn to master our passions, or temper our appetites, or wrest our inclinations to a compliance with reason, if that discipline were away, which the holy Psalmist intimateth, saying, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.*[n] How much we do love God, how submissive we are to God's will, how little we do value these mean things here, we cannot otherwise than by willingly undergoing or patiently bearing afflictions, well express: without it, no sure trial of virtue can be; without it, no excellent example of goodness had ever been. As therefore it is necessary that good men, even that they may be good, should suffer here; so it is, supposing a future judgment, very just that they should do so, that they may acquire a title to the rewards following it; rewards far outweighing the light afflictions they are put to endure here.†

In reference, therefore, to the present impunity of bad men, and letting iniquity to prevail or to proceed here, that which cured David, Job, and Solomon, may satisfy us; *going into the sanctuary, and understanding the end of those men;* considering, that *the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and shall be brought out to the day of wrath;*[o] that after all their jollity and pleasure, *God for all these things will bring them into judgment.*[p] In regard to the righteous being afflicted here, that of St. Paul may suffice, saying of them, *It is a manifest instance of God's righteous judgment, that they may be made worthy of the kingdom of God, for which they suffer:*[q] that of our Saviour, *Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and shall reproach*

* Ἅγνισον αὐτοὺς εἰς ἡμέραν σφαγῆς αὐτῶν.—LXX.

Ut victimæ saginantur, ut hostiæ coronantur. *Min. Fel*

† Justis quicquid malorum irrogatur, non est pœna criminis, sed virtutis examen.—*Aug.*

‡ Experitur, indurat, sibi ipsum præparat.—*Sen. de Prov.* 1.

[k] Rom. ii. 4; ix. 22; 2 Pet. iii. 9, 15.

[l] Rom. ix. 22; Jer. xii. 3.

[m] *Vide* Chrys. ἀνδρ. ά.

* Semper esse felicem, et sine morsu animi transire vitam, ignorare est rerum naturæ alteram partem.—*Sen. de Prov.* 4.

† Magnum exemplum nisi mala fortuna non invenit.—*Sen. de Prov.* 3—2 Cor. iv. 17; Rom. viii. 18; Matt. v. 12.

[n] Psal cxix. 67, 71, 75.—No martyrs, if no persecution.

[o] Psal. lxxiii. 17; Job xxi. 30.

[p] Rom. ii. 5; Eccles. xi. 9. [q] 2 Thess. i. 5.

you; rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven:[r] that of Solomon, *Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God.*[s] In respect to both sorts of men, that of St. Peter will resolve all doubt; *God knoweth how to deliver the godly out of trials, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.*[t] All scores will be fully quitted by the execution of that sentence pronounced by our judge himself, *The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*[u]

This hypothesis doth indeed, even to our common sense, thoroughly solve most of those appearances in the course of things here, which otherwise might seem intricate or strange; clearing Providence from all misprisions, and satisfying our minds, so far as is needful, concerning the reasons of most occurrences here. From it we may learn,

That God in this great drama, made up of his providence and our free-will concurrently or interchangeably acting, doth mean, in order to this catastrophe or judgment in the last and chief act, to let men go on playing their parts undisturbedly, according to their inclinations and humours, yet within certain limits, and under the check of his hand, in proper seasons, to prevent confusion of all interposing itself.*

That it is not, therefore, fit now by open significations, either of approbation or dislike, often to interrupt the process of human actions; especially considering that the final doom concerning persons is not to be grounded upon single passages, or the particular acts of one time, but upon the whole body of action passing through the course of each man's part, in the place and time allotted to him; and that he who now acteth laudably may, before all is done, come to faulter; he that now behaveth himself untowardly may afterward learn to do better, and in the end come off well.

* Διὰ τοῦτο οὔπω κρίσις, ἵνα κοινῇ πάντες στεφανωφῶμεν, ἵνα ἀπο πονηρίας πολλοὶ μεταβληθῶμεν εἰς ἀρετήν.—Chrys. in Matt. Or. 11.

[r] Luke vi. 22, 23.

[s] Eccles. viii. 12; Isa. iii. 10, 11.

[t] 2 Pet. ii. 29. [u] Matt. xxv. 46.

That hence it is not to be wondered, that God here should be somewhat reserved in dispensing testimonies of favour to those who at present do seem good, somewhat sparing in declaring wrath toward those who now appear bad;[v] that he should not miraculously pour down golden showers on the heads of the righteous, nor send *fire from heaven*, as angry men would have him, upon every provocation, to consume sinners.[w]

That this life is not a time of reaping, but of sowing; not of approbation, but of trial; not of triumph, but of combat: this world is not a place of enjoyment, but of work; our condition here is not a state of settlement, but of travel; whence no man should expect more of encouragement then is needful to support him in this work and way; should look to receive wages before his task is done; to get the prize, before he hath gone through the race; to gather the spoils, before he hath fought out the battle; to enjoy rest, before he is at his journey's end; to be put in full possession of happiness, before his right and title thereto is completely assured: that no man also should presume or please himself upon present impunity for his misbehaviour or sloth, like those of whom the Preacher saith, *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil;*[x] seeing this is the season of mercy and patience, when God commonly doth not further inflict crosses on us, than may serve to mind us of our duty, or urge us to the performance of it; and seeing the longer vengeance is withheld, the more heavy it will at last fall on us, if we despise the present season of grace, and proceed to the end in impenitence; that present impunity, therefore, is a sore punishment, and correction here a really great favour.

That ordinarily temporal prosperity and adversity, as in comparison to things relating to our future state they are plainly inconsiderable, so they can be no arguments of God's special favour or displeasure; whence it appeareth to be no small rashness to conclude how God stands affected to any person from what

[v] Eccles. iii. 11; viii. 17; xi. 5.

[w] Luke ix. 55.

[x] Eccles. viii. 11.

befalleth him here (as those who inferred concerning the Galileans, *whose blood Pilate mixed with their sacrifices*;[y] and concerning those Jews *upon whom the tower in Siloam did fall*, that they were more sinners than others of their nation;) yea, that if we must be interpreting God's mind from these occurrences, it is rather more reasonable to conceive that God disliketh them whom he doth not check, and approveth them whom he chastiseth;[z] whence the prosperity of bad men is rather pitiable then invidious, as that which aggravateth and strengheneth their wickedness, which accumulateth guilt, which draweth them forward, and plungeth them deeper into perdition; that the adversity of good men is no misery, but a blessing and happiness to them, as exercising and fortifying their virtues, ensuring their state, endearing them to God.[a] However,

That God plainly doth mean to vilify these present things, appearing to our sense good or evil, by scattering them abroad with an indifferent hand; so that his friends taste as little good and as much evil as his enemies.*

That there is no reason to wonder or to complain that things here do not go on in a course so smooth and straight as they should do;† for that vanity and iniquity have their part and time to act upon this stage, yea are allowed sometimes a seeming reign; but justice, though at present it seemeth to sleep, or to wink at things, will at length awake, and effectually bestir itself; that right, although here it may be sometime crossed or foiled, yet it can never be quelled or overthrown; it may be suspended, but cannot be suppressed; it may be somewhat eclipsed, but it cannot be quite extinguished, yea infallibly in the end it will triumphantly prevail.

That no good design shall be undertaken, nor any honest labour can be spent in vain; seeing although they chance to find no success, or to yield no fruit here, yet they cannot fail to obtain a happy issue and a plentiful reward hereafter.

That how small soever the difference doth now appear between wise men and fools, or between virtuous and vicious persons, there will be hereafter a vast discrimination made, when in consequence of that upright trial one shall enter into eternal bliss, the other shall fall into an abyss of misery.

That this life is not contemptible, nor all things here utterly vain; seeing that upon this life is founded our eternal state; seeing these occurrences have influence upon our eternal joy or wo; seeing all things here will conduce to the illustration of divine mercy or justice: that God is indeed here *Deus absconditus*, as the prophet styleth him, *a God that hideth himself*;[b] advisedly suffering his goodness and justice to be under a cloud, that at length they may break out more gloriously *in that day*, *when*, as St. Paul saith, his δικαιοκρισια, his most *righteous dealing* (both in governance of all affairs now, and in deciding of all cases then) *shall be revealed*, and made conspicuous to all the world.[c]

Thus doth it, upon many accounts, appear fit and needful that there should be a future judgment; the apprehension thereof being the sharpest spur to virtue, the strongest curb from vice, the surest fence of human society, the safest bulwark of religion (securing the authority of God, and guarding his providence, together with all his holy attributes, from all batteries, all sinister aspersions, all profane misconstructions;) in short, the most effectual means, if it be heartily embraced, to render men, in their minds and in their enjoyments, sober, just in their dealings toward their neighbour, and in all their life pious toward God; there being indeed no consideration, whereof the mind of man is capable, more apt to beget in him a care and conscience of what he doeth, than this: that after a very short and transitory life all his actions must undergo a strict scrutiny, according to the result whereof he shall be either approved and rewarded, or condemned and punished: whereof any man being thoroughly persuaded, and any wise considering it, he cannot surely

* Nullo modo potest Deus magis concupita traducere, quam si illa in turpissimos deferat, ab optimis abigit.—*Sen. de Prov.* 5.

† Dantur bonis ne putentur mala, dantur malis ne putentur summa bona.—*Aug.*

[y] Luke xiii. 1, &c.

[z] Prov. iii. 12; Job v. 17.

[a] Heb. xii. 7; Rev. iii. 19; Prov. xxiii. 17; Luke xvi. 25.

[b] Isa. xlv. 15.

[c] Rom. ii. 5.

but accuse himself of extreme folly and madness if he doth not provide for that account, and order all his practice with a regard thereto. The which use of this point God by his grace dispose us to make, for the sake of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

Now the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.[d] Amen.

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

SERMON XXXIII.

THE CERTAINTY AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF A FUTURE JUDGMENT FROM DIVINE REVELATION.

ACTS x. 42.—*And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained by God to be Judge of quick and dead.*

THESE words are part of a sermon preached by St. Peter to Cornelius and his friends, wherein the apostle briefly declareth unto them the chief particulars in the history of Christ, together with some main points of Christian doctrine most fit for them to know; particularly he doth in these words express the point concerning the *future judgment;* reporting that our Lord especially did charge his apostles *to preach unto the people and testify;* that is, first publicly to declare and explain, then by convenient proofs, especially by divine attestations, to evince and persuade this point; the importance whereof, and eminence among other Christian doctrines, doth hence plainly appear, that the author of our faith did make so especial provision, and gave so express charge concerning the promulgation and probation thereof: the which circumstance is indeed remarkable and weighty; but I shall not insist on it, meaning immediately to set upon considering the point itself, as it is here laid down in these terms; *that it is he which was ordained by God to be Judge of quick and dead:* in which words are couched three particulars most considerable.

1. A judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men.

2. The Judge, by whom immediately that judgment is administered: *he;* Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

3. The extent of that judgment, or its adequate object: *quick and dead.*

These particulars I shall in order touch, inserting some material considerations about the nature and manner of this judgment, with some reasons why it should be thus managed; then I shall adjoin some practical applications.

I. There is a judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men; that is, concerning the persons and actions of men performed in this life. How just and fit it is that there should be such a judgment, how useful and requisite the declaration thereof is upon several accounts (for engaging men upon the practice of virtue and restraining them from vice, for the preservation and maintenance of human society, for the support and defence of religion, for the vindication of divine Providence, and illustration of all God's holy attributes), I have already endeavoured to declare; and in that regard I shall content myself now to say, that as upon the apparent equity and usefulness of this doctrine all nations commonly have ever embraced the general substance thereof, as a fundamental principle of their religion (all men commonly with a ready inclination having avowed it reasonable to suppose that every man after this life shall be brought unto a just and impartial bar, where his doings shall be exactly scanned, and his person answerably doomed unto a comfortable or afflictive recompense), so our religion, in a peculiar manner, doth most expressly assert, most clearly describe, and most vigorously inculcate it, with all possible advantage, both for the clearing God's dealings and attributes, and for the excitement of men to a virtuous and pious life. The nature, manner, process, and result of the future judgment, are in

[d] 1 Thess. v. 23.

[a] Justyn Martyr, p. 1, et p. 106.

the holy scripture most punctually set down.

1. It teacheth us, that God hath appointed a determinate time for this judgment. *God* (saith St. Paul) *hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness;* that which is called *the day of judgment*, *the last day*, *the day of the Lord*, *the great* and *the illustrious day;* and, by signal excellency, *the day;* and, *that day*; intimating, beside the certainty of the thing itself, the most especial regard that men are concerned to bear thereto.[b]

2. That in order to this judgment, all the actions of men are with greater exactness registered in books (the books of divine omniscience, seeing all things present, and retaining all things past, which nothing can escape:) *The books* (it is said in the Revelation) *were opened*, and the *dead were judged from the things written in the books, according to their works.*[c]

3. That in order thereto, there shall be (effected by divine power and command) a general resurrection of all persons, both *just and unjust: The hour* (saith our Lord) *is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*[d]

4. That then all persons so raised shall be presented at the bar of our Lord, to answer and undergo their trial: *I saw* (saith St. John) *the great and small standing before God's throne;* and, *We must all* (saith St. Paul) *be made appear, and be set forth at the judgment-seat of Christ;* and, *The Son of man* (saith our Lord) *shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered together before him.*[e]

5. That then and there every thought, every word, every work of men, shall be thoroughly disclosed and discussed; so that it, together with its due quality and desert, shall plainly appear; all the designs and pretences of men shall be laid bare; every case shall be considered; every plea heard and scanned; the merits of every cause weighed in an even balance, according to truth and equity; men's neglects and omissions of duty shall also come under consideration; an account will be exacted of all the talents entrusted to any man (of the abilities, opportunities, and advantages he ever had of doing God service), and of what improvements answerable he hath made; what men have done themselves, and what they have done by others, from the influence of their advice, their persuasion, or their example, shall be searched out and poised: *God* (saith St. Paul) *will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts;* and, *Of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account at the day of judgment*, saith our Lord; and, *After a long time* (saith he again) *the Lord of those servants* cometh, and *reckoneth with them*, &c.; and, *Every work* (saith the Preacher) *God shall bring into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*[f]

6. That upon each man, according to the true quality of his doings, thus detected, examined, and stated, a definitive sentence shall pass, whereby he shall be acquitted and approved, or condemned and reprobated; τότε ὁ ἔπαινος γενήσεται ἑκάστῳ, *Then* (saith St. Paul) *praise shall be to each one;*[g] *praise*, that is, generally (by an εὐφημισμὸς, or favourable manner of speech), a due taxation and esteem, according to merit: then, *Well done, good and faithful servant*, and, *O thou bad and slothful servant*,[h] shall be pronounced to one or the other sort of men, respectively, according to their demeanour here.

7. That according to the purport of this sentence a discrimination shall be made;[i] and to one party a gracious reward, correspondent to the quality and measure of their good works, in a blissful place; to the other, a sorer punishment, in proportion to their demerits, in a place of misery: to the one, everlasting joy

[b] Acts xvii. 31; ii. 20; Jude 6; 2 Tim. i. 18; iv. 8; 1 Thess. v. 4; Heb. x. 25.

[c] (Job xiii. 27; xiv. 17;) Rev. xx. 12; Dan. vii. 10.

[d] Acts xxiv. 15; John v. 28.

[e] Rev. xx. 12; Rom. xiv. 10; Φανερωθῆναι, 2 Cor. v. 10; Παρίστασθαι, Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

[f] 1 Cor. iv. 5; Rom. ii. 29; 1 Pet. 4, 5; Matt. xii. 36; xxv. 18; Eccles. xii. 4.

[g] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [h] Matt. xxv. 21, 26.

[i] Μισθαποδοσία, Heb. xi. 26.

and glory above in heaven; to the other, endless sorrow and shame beneath in hell, shall be assigned and dispensed effectually.[j] *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works:* he will *separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left: then the King shall say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*— and, *Then he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:* and, the good and faithful servant shall *enter into his Master's joy;*[k] the bad and slothful *shall be cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth:*[l] so our Lord himself expresseth it; and St. Paul thus: *We must* (saith he) *all appear before the tribunal of God,* ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος, *that each one may bear away the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad:*[m] and, *God will render unto every man according to his works: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil:*[n] and even of old, the prophet Daniel thus briefly did express this different doom: *Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*[o] Hence in regard to one party is the time of judgment styled *the season of refreshment*, the *day of redemption*, the time of *recompense;* in reference to the other, *the day of wrath*, the *day of destruction*, the time of *vengeance;* when our Lord *will* (as St. Paul saith) *take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*[p]

8. We are also further taught, that all this shall be transacted in a regular, public, and most solemn manner, in open court, in the face and audience of all the world, before angels and men. For our Lord is described coming to judgment with attendance of all the holy angels; and the saints, being themselves first approved, shall become assessors there; and all men are represented as present at the trial, or as spectators and auditors thereof:[q] *Whosoever* (saith our Lord) *shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God:*[r] and, *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known: whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light: and that which ye have spoken in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.*[s]

9. That also the judgment shall pass to the full conviction and entire satisfaction of all that are present; so that each one concerned therein shall be forced in conscience to acquiesce in his doom, as most just and equal; the condemned stooping with awe to his justice; the absolved adoring with humble reverence his mercy; the spectators applauding with admiration his holy wisdom: for that day will be, as St. Paul calleth it, *a day of revelation of God's righteous judgment;* and God, in regard thereto, is represented speaking thus: *To me, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall give glory to God:* and, our *Lord, in that day* (saith St. Paul) *will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe:* and, *He will* then, as it is in St. Jude, *convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodlily committed, and of all the hard speeches which ungodly sinners*

[j] Matt. xvi. 27.
[k] Matt. xxv. 32, &c.
[l] Matt. xxv. 21, 30.
[m] 2 Cor. v. 10.
[n] Rom. ii. 6-9.
[o] Dan. xii. 2.
[p] Acts iii. 19; Eph. iv. 30; Luke xiv. 12; Col. iii. 24; Rom. ii. 5; 2 Pet. iii. 7; 2 Thess. i. 8.
[q] 2 Thess. i. 7; Luke ix. 26; Matt. xxv. 31; xvi. 27; Jude 14; 1 Cor. vi. 2; Matt. xix. 28.
[r] Luke xii. 8, 9; Matt. x. 32.
[s] Luke xii. 2.

have spoken against him.[t] So that thereupon those confessions and acclamations of praise in the Revelation shall be resounded through heaven: *Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and power, be to the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments: Salvation be unto our Lord, that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb: Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints.*[u]

Thus do the holy Pandects of our religion set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein all the attributes of God shall be conspicuously glorified; his wonderful clemency shall be sweetly displayed, his exact justice shall be terribly demonstrated, his perfect wisdom shall be clearly unfolded; wherein the knotty intrigues of providence shall be loosed, and the mysterious depths of the divine counsels shall be laid open; and God's honour, which now by the bold and rash judgments of men is often attacked, shall be thoroughly cleared and repaired, to the joyful satisfaction of all pious men, and sad confusion of the impious; wherein the great wisdom of those who before all things choose to be good and to serve God, and the extreme folly of those who scorn or neglect piety, shall be most evidently apparent; wherein, finally, all scores that now so undiscernibly run on, shall be exactly quitted and even; impartial right shall be done; every man shall have his due assigned and rendered to him.

But let so much suffice concerning the judgment appointed. We proceed to the next particular, the Judge ordained: *he;* that is, Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

II. The original right and absolute power of judging doth inseparably pertain to God Almighty, whose creatures, whose servants, whose subjects, we are, and consequently to whose judgment we stand obnoxious; as he is naturally the Sovereign Lord and King of the world, so he is, as the apostle calleth him, κριτὴς πάντων, the *Judge of all* persons and things; and particularly *Judge of all the earth*, or of all men, as Abraham did style him;[w] as upon the grounds specified we do owe obedience to the laws he prescribeth us, performance of the service he allotteth us, and improvement of the talents he committeth to us; so we do thence stand obliged to render an account to him of our correspondent behaviour, and due management in those respects, and are liable to the judgment he shall make thereof; all judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, and by virtue of authority derived from him; otherwise that of St. Paul, *Who art thou that judgest another's servant*, might be alleged against any, who, without license or commission from him, should presume to judge us.[x]

Now that immediately God should administer any judgment, is incongruous to his nature and to ours; it is particularly unsuitable to the manner of this judgment, which God designeth to be such as may pass openly before all the world, to the conspicuous declaration of his glorious justice and mercy, to the clear satisfaction and conviction of all persons interested therein: which, that it might be, *it was fit* (as St. Austin saith) *that they who were to be judged should see their judge;** it is fit that the assistants and spectators, or witnesses thereof, should discern the process: but the glorious and dreadful presence of God cannot be discernible by us, or would not be supportable: *He* (saith St. Paul) *inhabiteth inaccessible light*, so *that no man hath seen, or can see him:*[y] and, *Thou canst not see my face*, saith he to Moses; *for there shall no man see me, and live:*[z] that majesty, before which the purest seraphims, being dazzled with its infinite brightness, are constrained to veil their faces; that presence, of which the prophet saith, *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt in his presence; yea, the world, and all that dwell therein:*[a] how should frail and impure flesh sustain, how

[t] Rom. ii. 5; xiv. 11; 2 Thess. i. 10; Jude 15.

[u] Rev. xix. 2; xvi. 7; vii. 10; xv. 3.

[w] Heb. xii. 13; Gen. xviii. 25.

* Etenim ea quæ judicantur, oportebat videre judicem et scire hunc a quo judicantur, &c.—*Iren.* iii. 9.

Rectum erat, ut judicandi viderent judicem. —*Aug.*

[x] Rom. xiv. 4.

[y] 1 Tim. vi. 16.

[z] Exod. xxxiii. 20; Isa. vi. 2.

[a] Nah. i. 5; (Psal. civ. 32; xviii. 18.)

should guilty sinners appear before him? *Who may stand in his sight when he is angry?* when he is angry, *at whose wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation:*[b] what ear of mortal man could endure that *voice, at which the earth melteth;* that *reproof, at which the pillars of heaven are astonished?*[c] It being therefore, from the divine excellency, impossible or inconvenient that God himself, immediately as such, should exercise judgment; it hath pleased him in his stead to constitute one most fit for that employment; as he for particular temporal judgments here hath appointed princes and governors visibly to manage them as his ministers and vicegerents in his name and behalf; so that universal and ultimate judgment he hath (for his own greater glory and our special benefit) committed unto his beloved Son Jesus, our blessed Mediator and Saviour; the same who, with most admirable condescension of grace and charity, did once come hither in our nature to rescue us from sin and misery; who underwent so many crosses and troubles for us; who freely laid down his life to redeem and save us: he it is, who is ὡρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κριτής, *decreed* and determined *by God* (or under him, as his substitue and deputy) *to be our judge:*[d] so in our text; and so again St. Paul: *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness,* ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισεν, *by the man,* or in the man, *whom he hath ordained;*[e] whence it is called *the judgment-seat of Christ, before which we must appear:* and, *The Father* (saith our Lord himself) *judgeth no man* (that is, immediately and separately), *but hath given all judgment to the Son:* and, *The Father* (he addeth) *hath given to the Son the authority, and to execute judgment because he is the Son of man;*[f] that is, God hath conferred on him the sovereign regal authority, and hath particularly committed to him that prime branch thereof, judicial power; *even as he is the Son of man:* so that as in our nature he performed all that was requisite to save us, as in our nature he was exalted to God's right hand to rule and bless us; so for consummation of all done in our regard, he shall in our nature appear to judge us;* awarding to us the rewards he purchased for us, or punishments for the contempt of his favours.

And, indeed, that he under this name and notion was designed to this office, even the ancient prophets did foreshow: for it was *one like the Son of man* whom *Daniel did behold coming with the clouds of heaven,* having all royal dominion and power given unto him;[g] and it was, according to Isaiah's predictions, the *Son, born and given unto us, upon whose shoulder the government should be,* and to whom the kingdom should be assigned, *to order it, and establish it, with judgment and justice for ever.*[h]

The point, then, is manifest, that our Saviour Jesus, by designment and deputation from God, is invested with this eminent office and power. And why it should be so, many reasons, many fair congruities, may be assigned.

1. It was requisite (as we before touched) that the judge should be visible, and audible; such whom the parties concerned might (without extreme surprise and amazement) discern and converse with, in order to their clearer and fuller satisfaction, or conviction: such our Lord, the Son of man, clothed with glorified flesh, will be: his mild and sweet, though bright and stately aspect, all men in some manner may be capable of seeing; his calm and clear voice all men may hear: him the just may with cheerful satisfaction behold smiling on them with gracious kindness; and the wicked also with sad confusion may view frowning toward them with just disdain; those with comfortable joy may hear him acquitting, commending, and blessing them; these with due regret also may hear him convincing, reproving, and denouncing the fatal curse on them: so that hereupon the former, with humble thankfulness, shall willingly acknowledge and praise his grace; the latter, with shameful hor-

[b] Psal. lxxvi. 7; cxxx. 3; cxliii. 2; Jer. x. 10.
[c] Psal. xlvi. 6; Job xxvi. 11.
[d] (1 Cor. xv. 27.) [e] Acts xvii. 31.
[f] Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 4; John v. 22, 27; 2 Tim. iv. 1.

* Illa forma videbitur Filii, quam sibi per sacramentum incarnationis univit, &c.—*Prosp. Sent.* 337.
[g] Dan. vii. 13, 14.
[h] Isa. vii. 14; ix. 6, 7; xi. 3; xlii. 1, 3.

ror, constrainedly shall confess their guilt before him: *Behold* (saith St. John, with an emphatical regard it seems to this consideration) *he cometh in the clouds; and every eye shall see him, even they who pierced him:*[i] and, *They* (saith our Lord himself) *shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory:*[j] and our Lord is represented in judgment speaking and arguing the case with all parties concerned, receiving their plea, and expressing his mind to them: this is a kind of natural capacity qualifying him for this employment; but there are considerations of a higher nature peculiarly fitting him for it.

2. It was indeed a good part of that regal office, which God, in reward of his obedience, and to declare his acceptance thereof, did confer upon him; giving him *a power over all flesh, all authority in heaven and earth;* whence it is by St. Paul called *his kingdom: I charge thee* (saith he to Timothy) *before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom:*[k] he being then our King, and as such the fountain of all justice, must either himself in person, or by some delegate, administer it; but that he should immediately do it, divers special reasons do suggest themselves.

3. It is an office of too great eminence and dignity to be imparted to any other: he alone who subsists in union with God, who is the Son of God, who hath most highly pleased God, who hath merited a sovereignty over us, and a supreme eminency above all creatures, is capable of the honour to determine those points of the highest importance concerning the final doom of God's creatures, and the salvation of those souls whom he hath purchased: *Worthy is he alone to receive the book* (of judgment), *and to open the seals thereof; because he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood: Worthy is the Lamb* (worthy exclusively, and solely) *that was slain, to receive the power and honour, the glory and blessing,*[l] annexed to this high office.

As there is nothing more apt to beget in us veneration toward him, than considering that he shall be our judge, upon whose sentence our fate and felicity must depend; so it is therefore most fit, that it incommunicably and solely should belong to him; especially seeing God with especial regard to his honour did assign the judicial office to him: the *Father*, it is said, *hath committed all judgment to the Son; that all men might honour the Son, as they do the Father.*[m]

4. He alone also hath capacities proper for this judicature: he only hath that divine faculty of searching men's hearts; he only is furnished with wisdom to know all matters of fact that ever were, and to discern the right in every case;* he above all, being absolutely good, is endued with perfect equity of mind, and immutable love of right, always disposing him to judge most justly; he alone can have in him that μετριοπάθεια, or exact temperament of affection toward men which is requisite to the distribution of equal justice toward them, according to due measures of mercy and severity;[n] the highest angels in heaven were incapable so rightly to distinguish the strict bounds of these things. Wherefore in regard to these dispositions peculiar to him, we are even by the ancient prophets informed that this office is allotted to him: *The spirit of the Lord* (saith Isaiah) *shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom—and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth:*[o] and, *A bruised reed* (saith God in the same prophet, intimating his incomparable sagacity, equity and temper, as it were, for this purpose) *shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth:*[p] and, *Thou* (saith the Psalmist concerning him) *lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*[q]

5. By this designation the glory of

[i] Rev. i. 7.
[j] Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64; xxv. 34, &c.
[k] John xvii. 2; Matt. xxviii. 18; 2 Tim. iv. 1.
[l] Rev. v. 9, 12.

* Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ μόνος κριτής, ὅτι δυναμάρτητος μόνος.—Clem. Al. Pæd. l. 2.
[m] John v. 22, 23.
[n] Heb. v. 2.
[o] Isa. xi. 2, 3, 4.
[p] Isa. xliii. 3.
[q] Psal. xlv. 7.

God is especially promoted, his most excellent attributes being much illustrated thereby: his wisdom appeareth in constituting one so in all respects most fit to discharge the office, and his goodness most clearly shines therein: for since it was requisite that a judgment should pass upon us, how could the terror thereof be better allayed, than by putting it into the hands of his Son? to whose cognizance, were the choice permitted to us, should we rather submit our actions, than to his? to whom rather should we freely commit all our life and welfare, than to him, who by nature is so nearly allied to us, and hath not disdained to call us *brethren?* who in disposition of spirit is so *meek and lowly*, so *merciful* and *compassionate?*[r] who here was visibly in disposition and demeanour a lamb, and is represented to us continuing such; than to him who by so many signal experiments hath expressed an excess of kindness towards us, and tenderness of our welfare; who hath conspicuously evidenced himself to be the best friend to mankind; that he ardently desireth the salvation of all men, even of his worst enemies; for whom he willingly did spend his blood, for whom he dying earnestly prayed; whom he continually wooeth to reconciliation and repentance, and consequently to the enjoyment of greatest happiness? How then could God more plainly express his goodness toward us, than in assigning such a judge for us?

How also could he exhibit a more illustrious instance of his justice, and love to righteousness, than in advancing him to so glorious an office, who out of perfect compliance to his will did freely stoop so low, and gladly undergo so much? Worthy of God it was, and a congruous retribution, to place the crown on his head, to put the sceptre into his hand, who willingly bore a cross, who patiently submitted to scourge;[s] to constitute him the Judge, who out of abundant piety to God, and charity to God's creature, was contented to be arraigned, to be sentenced, to be executed as a malefactor: he dearly purchased the right to be *Lord of dead and living;* and just it was, that in effect he should obtain it.[t]

[r] Matt. xi. 20; Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15.
[s] Rev. v. 12. [t] Rom. xiv. 9.

6. Just it likewise was, that to him, immediately and solemnly, should be consigned a power to acknowledge and reward his faithful friends and servants; those who had believed his word, had observed his laws, had out of love and respect done much and suffered much for him.

Just also it was, that he should be empowered to do himself right upon his proud and spiteful enemies; that he should see them lying under his feet, and at his disposal, who had so scornfully insulted on him, and so cruelly misused him; that he righteously should judge them, who so maliciously had accused and so injuriously condemned him; should chastise them severely, who most unmercifully had afflicted and slaughtered him; should worthily reprobate all those, who had unworthily rejected him: in fine, that he should render a due recompense to all wicked persons, who by distrusting his word, by despising his overtures of grace and mercy, by resisting his will and rejecting his authority, by trampling upon his holy doctrine and laws, had wronged, had dishonoured, had disclaimed him.

7. This appointment of Jesus for our Judge is further very conducible to our edification, in way of excitement to the practice of our duty, and encouragement thereto; in way of consolation and satisfaction to our soul.

It considered is apt to raise in us a high reverence and dread of our Saviour; and consequently to dispose us to the observance of his laws, and imitation of his example.

It is matter of special comfort and encouragement to consider, that hence assuredly we shall find a fair and favourable trial; since it is no enemy, not one disaffected, yea, not one indifferently affected toward us, who shall judge us, but our best friend; from whom we may expect not only justice and equity, but all the favour and kindness our cause will bear.

It also, duly pondered, is most proper to work in us an earnest care, and fear of sinning, and thereby of becoming obnoxious to condemnation: for what an aggravation will it yield to our whether foolish perverseness or slothful negligence; how extreme disingenuity, how

wretched ingratitude will it argue in us, to be cast and condemned by such a judge; a judge so fair and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign and favourable to us; so willing to acquit us, so desirous to save us! With what face, think we, having transgressed his most good and righteous laws, having rejected all his gracious tenders of mercy and favour, having defeated all his most serious purposes, and frustrated his most painful endeavours for our welfare; having violated our manifold obligations and engagements to him; having abused his so unexpressible great love and good-will toward us; having hence deplorably forfeited all his favour, and incurred his most grievous displeasure; with what face, I say, having done all this, shall we appear in his presence? how then shall we bear the frowns of his tender love changed into fierce disdain: of highest patience turned into extreme fury, of so terrible a majesty provoked by so heinous affronts? with what heart shall we hear that once most sweet and charming voice, which in so pleasant and affectionate a strain did sound forth words of peace and comfort in our ears; that so kindly invited us to recolciliation, so meekly sued us to a compliance with him, so liberally offered to us the best things in the world upon so gentle terms, now only uttering toward us bitter complaints and sore rebukes;[u] thundering forth words of indignation and terror, denouncing most horrible menaces and curses upon us.

Thus, and to such purposes, is Jesus our Lord appointed to be our Judge: I shall only further touch the manner of his exercising and executing this office, or the way of his address and proceeding thereto; the which in holy scripture (for the begetting in us a regard, veneration, and awe suitable thereto) is described to be the greatest glory, state, and solemnity. Our Lord came once in a meek humility to show us our duty, but he shall come again with a dreadful majesty to exact an account thereof; taking his progress from the highest heaven in most royal magnificent equipage, attended upon with a numerous, or with a numberless, and most pompous train of angels (*with all the holy angels*, it is expressly said), accompanied with triumphal shouts and acclamations; *a trumpet of God* (that is, a wonderfully and unconceivably sonorous trumpet, blown, as it were, by the mouth of God), and *the voice of an archangel* resounding before him an universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as shall immediately, *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*, shake all the earth, and rouse all the dead out of their mortal slumber; the irresistible breath of that all-powerful voice wafting them, together with all surviving people, through the clouds into the presence of their Judge, conspicuously seated in most glorious state upon his royal tribunal.[v]

This same Jesus said the two angels to the apostles, expressing this matter in the most simple and plain manner, *shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven: a cloud took him up from their eyes* then, and the clouds, as they imply, should restore him to their sight; for, *Behold* (saith St. John) *he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him:* and, *They shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven in power and great glory;* and, *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory*, saith our Lord himself somewhat more explicitly:[w] but St. Paul with most punctuality describeth the manner of his appearance: *The Lord* (saith he) *shall descend from heaven with a shout* (ἐν κελεύσματι, with an exciting or commanding summons), *with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*[x] In such manner, to the purpose of exciting due respect and dread within us, is our Lord represented at the end of the world to come down from heaven, for the exercising this judgment.

III. I proceed to the last particular observed in the text, which is the objects, or the extent of the judgment ordained;

[u] 2 Cor. v. 20.

[v] μυριάσιν, Heb. xii. 22; Matt. xxv. 31; Jude 14; 1 Thess. iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 17; Matt. xxv. 31.

[w] Acts i. 11; Rev. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 30; xvi. 64; xxv. 31; xvi. 27; 2 Thess. i. 17

[x] 1 Thess. iv. 16; 1 Cor xv. 52.

whom is our Lord ordained to judge? how many shall they be? It is resolved: all, without exception; expressed here by the words *quick and dead;* and otherwhere by St. Paul: *I charge thee*, saith he to Timothy, *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing and his kingdom;*[y] and by St. Peter likewise: *Who* (saith he, concerning profane men) *shall render an account to him that is ready to judge both the quick and the dead:*[z] which places evidently do confirm the truth of the proposition, that all men are obnoxious and shall be subjected to this judgment; but yet so that the words themselves, *quick and dead*, may seem to need some explication; for it being a common law, to which all men by nature, such as it now stands, after the curse, are subject to undergo death; for thence *it is* (as the apostle saith) *appointed for men once to die, and after death the judgment;* and, *What man is he* (saith the Psalmist) *that shall not see death?*[a] and that being so, why should not the dead comprehend all that are to be judged? accordingly as we see it expressed in the Revelation: *I saw the dead, great and small, standing before God—and the dead were judged for the things written in the books, according to their works.*[b] The dead were judged; no mention is made of the living: wherefore, to evade this objection, some have interpreted the dead and living, not for a distinction of persons, but of parts in men; of the living souls and dead bodies of men: others have taken the words as signifying metaphorically *the living*, that is, righteous men, say they, or persons endued with a spiritual life; and *the dead*, that is, persons *dead in trespasses and sins*, or void of spiritual sense and activity.[c] But the difficulty is not so mighty as to force us upon so remote and absonous interpretations, St. Paul having plainly enough showed us how to understand his words, and how to solve the knot propounded; that by the living are to be understood those who shall be found, as it were surprised, alive at our Lord's coming; by the dead, all other persons, who from the beginning before that time, had deceased, and should be raised up at the sound of the last trump: *This we say to you* (saith he to the Thessalonians) *in the word of the Lord, that we which live, remaining at the presence of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.*[d] Our Lord is therefore supposed by the apostle to find some alive at his coming; wherefore, that which is affirmed concerning all men being appointed to taste death (being otherwise, as the instances of Enoch and Elias show, liable to exception), is to be understood, by a synecdoche very ordinary in such cases, for the incomparably greater part of men; for all indeed, but one generation; or with this abatement, all but those whose death shall be prevented by our Lord's appearance (the which is set out as very sudden and unexpected, *like*, the coming of *a thief in the night;*) even those men also being in nature and condition mortal like others, although accidentally thus escaping the actual stroke of death. Neither shall even those persons be so exempted from death, but that they must undergo somewhat equivalent thereto; a change, which shall render them alike prepared for judgment with those who had undergone death; for, *Behold* (saith St. Paul again to the Corinthians) *I tell you a mystery: We shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye:* which words alone do with sufficient evidence declare the meaning of this distinction between *quick*, and *dead*.[e] The sum is, that all persons, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what sex or what age soever, shall be exposed to the judgment; high and low, rich and poor, wise and simple, learned and ignorant, good and bad; the mightiest princes and lords, no less than the meanest subjects and slaves; the subtlest statesmen and deepest scholars, no less than the silliest idiots: in a word, most universally *all* without any distinction, any privilege, any acceptance of persons, all and every one must certainly appear at this bar, must undergo this trial, must here receive their sentence and doom, must undergo reward or punishment accordingly.

IV. The doctrinal part I have thus gone

[y] 2 Tim. iv. 1; Rom. xiv. 9.
[z] 1 Pet. iv. 5.
[a] Heb. ix. 27; ἀπόκειται, Isa. lxxxix. 48.
[b] Rev. xx. 12.
[c] Eph. ii. 1.
[d] 1 Thess. iv. 15.
[e] 1 Cor. xv. 51.

through of this grand point; it remaineth to make some application thereof. The considering it is indeed most necessary, and exceedingly profitable in many respects: there is no kind of virtue or good practice, which the serious consideration thereof is not apt to produce; no good affection, which it may not serve to excite; no good duty, to which it doth not powerfully engage us: there is likewise no ill passion, which it may not help to quell or repress; no bad design or action, which it may not effectually deter or discourage us from. Of so many particular uses I shall only touch those which are most obvious; especially those unto which the scripture doth expressly apply the consideration thereof.

1. It greatly doth engage us to be very circumspect in all our conversation, and vigilant over our ways; for since by irreversible decree it is appointed that we must render an account of every thought arising in our mind (at least of those which find harbour and entertainment there;) of every word that passeth through our mouth; of every action which we do undertake; what exceeding reason have we, with most attentive and accurate regard, to mind whatever we do![f] since it is certain, that for all these things we shall be judged, but uncertain to us when we shall be called thereto;[g] how watchful are we concerned to be, that we be not surprised, and found unready to yield a good account; how observant in all reason should we be of our Lord's admonition in the gospel, *Watch, for ye do not know the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh;* how affected should we be with that warning or menace in the Revelation, *If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know when I come upon thee!* It may be, as we see intimated, the next day, for all we can know, or the next hour, when death seizing on us shall carry us into that prison or place of durance, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar; and what an unexpressible misery then will it be, to be found unprepared for the trial, and unable to render a good account! If we be quite asleep, in a total neglect of our duty; or if we be drowsy, in a careless and sluggish performance thereof; or if our senses rest amused upon other cares and businesses impertinent to this account; in what an extreme danger do we abide! as our Saviour again doth warn, advising thus: *Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.*[h] You know what the fortune was of the foolish virgins, whose *lamps were gone out* for want of oil; that is, whose souls were destitute of true goodness, and whose lives consequently did not shine with good works;[i] how, being surprised in that case by the bridegroom's coming, they were unfit to meet him, they were excluded from his favour, they were rejected, with an *I know you not.* The like fate you know of that bad servant, who, *saying in his heart, My Lord delayeth to come* (that is, not believing, or not considering his state in relation to the future judgment), *began to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken*;(that is, did live in the practice of injustice, uncharitableness, and intemperance;) his fate shall be this: *The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites:*[j] the same, if we do live in gross neglect, or in heinous violation of our duty, will be our doom. *Let therefore* (as our Lord again doth enjoin and inculcate) *our loins be girded about, and our lamps burning; and we ourselves like men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh, we may open unto him immediately.*[k] *Let us* (as St. Peter exhorteth) *gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that* (in case of our faithful and constant obedience) *shall be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*[l] In fine, considering these things, *what manner of persons then ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of*

[f] Matt. xxv. 13; xxiv. 42, 44.
[g] Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15.
[h] Luke xxi. 34; 1 Thess. v. 3.
[i] Matt. xxv. 8.
[j] Matt. xxiv. 48. [k] Luke xii. 45, 46, 35, 36.
[l] 1 Pet. i. 13.

our Lord?[m] as that great apostle doth again admonish and argue.

2. The consideration of this point is the most effectual means possible to beget and preserve sincerity in us; disposing us to live simply, without dissimulation or deceit; speaking as we think, doing what we profess, performing what we promise, being as we seem; for, seeing our hearts must be thoroughly searched and sifted; since our most retired thoughts must be disclosed; since our most secret designs and our desires must come to light, and be exposed to the public view of angels and men; since the day approacheth, when (all vizards being taken off, all varnish of pretence being wiped away) every person shall appear stark naked in his own true shape and colours; every thing shall seem what it really is, divested of false glosses; what profit can it be now to dissemble, to conceal, or to disguise our thoughts or doings? To what purpose doth it serve to palliate our ambitious or covetous intents with specious garbs of zeal or conscience? What comfort can we find in driving on our self-interests, or satisfying our private resentments, in disturbing the peace of mankind, or fomenting stirs and factions in the world under such masks? What a folly is it to delude men with false appearances, or rather by them to abuse themselves; seeing they soon will be rightly informed, and we grievously disgraced for it? What other satisfaction indeed can we have, than in real goodness and pure integrity in heart and life; whereby we may now approve our consciences unto God, and shall afterward by his unquestionable judgment be approved to all the world? Our true wisdom is to be εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι, as St. Paul speaketh; that is, *simple and inoffensive toward the day of Christ;*[n] that is, without any indirect regard or design, conscionably to perform our duty toward God and man, in order to the rendering a good account at the last judgment; our best comfort will prove that of St. Paul —*the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.*[o]

[m] 2 Pet. iii. 12.
[n] Phil. i. 10.
[o] 2 Cor. i. 10.

3. The consideration of this point should render us very sober and serious in all our thoughts, our opinions, our affections, our actions; suppressing all proud and haughty conceits, all admiration of these transitory things, all vicious excesses, all vain curiosities, all wanton joys and satisfactions: for,

Why should any apprehension of worldly state, of wealth, of honour, of wit, of any natural or acquired endowment, puff up our minds, seeing the day is near at hand, which in these regards will quite level men, and set them all upon even ground before an impartial bar, where no such things shall be had in any consideration or regard; when all secular and external advantages being laid aside, the moral qualities of men only shall be taxed and estimated;* a day wherein all these admired vanities shall vanish into nothing; all our empty tumours shall be depressed; all the fond arrogance of man shall be confounded; so that the proud and profane ones of the world shall be constrained to say after the Wise Man, *What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with their vaunting brought us? All these things are passed away, as a shadow, and as a post that hasted by.*[p]

And why should we much value those splendid toys, or that sordid trash, which men here do so eagerly scrape, and scramble, and scuffle for; which then evidently will be discountenanced, will at least appear worthless and unprofitable to us? what indeed in this world, supposing this judgment, or being truly rated, can seem great or worthy to affect us?

And why, having affairs on foot of so immensely vast importance, should we amuse ourselves with trivial matters, impertinent at least, if not prejudicial to our main accounts?

And how shall we dare to embrace the serpent of sinful excess, considering, beside the poison in its body, what a dreadful sting it carrieth in the tail thereof; how these flashes of pleasure do kindle a flame, that will scorch us to eternity?

* Οὐ πλούσιος, οὐ πένης, οὐ δυνάστης, οὐκ ἀσθενὴς, οὐ σοφὸς, οὐκ ἄσοφος, οὐ δοῦλος, οὐκ ἐλεύθερος, οὐδεὶς ἐκεῖ φανεῖται, ἀλλὰ τῶν προσωπείων τούτων συντριβέντων, ἡ τῶν ἔργων ἐξέτασις ἔσται μόνη.—Chrys. in Matt. xvii. 9.

[p] Wisd. v. 8, 9.

One thought of judgment mixed with any brutish enjoyments were enough, one would think, to allay their sweetness, to render them indeed not only insipid, but distasteful and bitter to us.

And how can we be easily transported into wild merriments, suffering our minds to be ruffled, and the tone of our reason to be slackened by them, if we consider how infinitely serious business lieth upon us; what a dismal hazard we stand in, how nearly our everlasting welfare lieth at stake? If here in this world we were bound in few days to undergo a trial concerning our life, all our estate, and all our reputation, we should deem it seasonable to be somewhat intent, to be indeed very solicitous about what we should plead, and how we should get off; rather than to be lightly sporting at, and loosening our minds in little pleasant humours; much more rather than to be loosing our minds, and banishing all sober thoughts away in exorbitant frolics: extremely wild or stupid would he seem, who in such a case should so behave himself: it is plainly the case of us all, in a degree infinitely more high than we can suppose any other to be: wherefore reflecting thereon should, methinks, quash all extravagant and dissolute mirth, apt to beat out of our minds and hearts the care of our souls; should compose our minds into a very serious frame; should presently drive us into, and constantly hold us in, a sober sadness of heart; it is a duty which both in wisdom and piety we do owe to this great matter (*the terror of the Lord*, as St. Paul calleth it), to fear and dread it:[q] with which disposition of spirit excessive transports of carnal joy are scarce consistent. However, let us hear (let us, I say, whose spirits are high, and fancies strong, hear) what the great observer of the world, the Preacher, doth admonish: *Rejoice* (saith he), *O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.*[r]

4. The consideration of this point should engage us carefully to improve all the talents by God's providence and grace committed to us; that is, all the means and abilities, all the advantages and opportunities afforded us of doing good, or serving God. Hath God bestowed wealth upon us? this will engage us so to use it, as not therewith to cherish our pride, or pamper our luxury, not merely to gratify our pleasure or humour; but to expend it in succouring our indigent neighbour, or otherwise promoting God's service. Hath God invested us with power? this should induce us to use it moderately and frugally; not therewith to domineer or insult over our brethren, not any wise to wrong or misuse them; but to yield protection, aid, and comfort, to them; to afford patronage and succour to right; to minister encouragement, support, and defence, to virtue; *remembering that we have also a Lord in heaven*, and a judge, to whom we must be accountable.[s] Hath God vouchsafed us any parts, any wit, any knowledge? this should move us to employ them, not so much in contriving projects to advance our own petty interests, or in procuring vain commendation to ourselves, as in setting forth God's praise, in recommending goodness, in drawing men with the most advantage we can to the practice of virtue and piety. Hath God conferred on us any thing of honour or credit among men? this may oblige us not to build high conceits upon it, or to find vain complacencies therein; but to use it as an instrument of bringing honour to God, of ministering aid or countenance to the interests of piety: to those purposes, I say, this consideration greatly serveth; for that it is plainly declared, that we are but stewards of these things, having received them in trust, not to use them according to our pleasure, but to employ them with the best advantage for God's service;[t] and accordingly shall in the last judgment be strictly accountable for them: so that if we have embezzled or perverted them to abuse, it will then appear far worse for us, than if we never had received them; much better indeed it will be for us, that we had been poorest beggars, silliest idiots, most despicable wretches here, than not to have duly improved our wealth, parts, and honour, to God's service: *To whomsoever*

[q] 2 Cor. v. 11.
[r] Eccles. xi. 9.
[s] Eph. vi. 9.
[t] Matt. xxv. 14; xxiv. 45.

much is given, from him much shall be required,[u] is the rule that punctually in that great audit will be observed.

5. The consideration of this point may induce us to the observing strict justice and equity in all our dealings: there are in this world many advantages of doing injury and iniquity safely in respect to men; without intrenching upon human laws, without incurring any check or any correction from them; they reach to very few cases, they retrench only some great outrages, and punish some enormous crimes, apparently noxious to the peace or welfare of common society;* the stroke of human law may also (even where it taketh cognizance, where it maketh provision to secure right, or repair wrong) often be evaded by power, or eluded by sleight, by gift, by favour: but as the divine law doth extend universally to the prohibition of all iniquity whatever (small as well as great, secret no less than visible), so the divine judgment inevitably will reach to all: the least wrongful word, by which we hurt the good name of our neighbour, the least exaction or hard dealing with him, the least overreaching him by craft (however blameless these things may seem here, however they may pass with commendation, as instances of wit or ability), will surely then be condemned and punished: *Let no man* (saith St. Paul) *go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter*, διότι ἔκδικος ὁ Κύριος περὶ πάντων τοιούτων *because God will judge and avenge for all these things*;[v] so that, as the same apostle teacheth us, *the unjust, the wrongful, the revilers, the rapacious, shall not inherit the kingdom of God*;[w] that day will detect all wicked fraud and cozenage, will defeat all unjust might and oppression; no power shall be able to break through, no wit shall skill to decline, no friendship or favour will help to keep off the impartial sentence and the irresistible stroke of that judgment: *There is no darkness or shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves*[x] from being detected, from being prosecuted and punished. The poor, the meek, the simple, who rather choose to suffer than do wrong, shall there find a certain patronage and a full redress; that strict abstinence from wrong, which here may pass for simplicity, shall then be approved for the best wisdom; and this overreaching craft, which now men are so conceited of, will then appear wretched folly, when all ill-gotten profits with shameful regret shall in effect be refunded, yea shall bring grievous damages and sore penalties for them: in fine, then it will be most evident, that he who injureth another doth indeed chiefly hurt himself; he that cheateth his neighbour doth really gull himself, and abuse his own soul.

6. The consideration of this point is apt to breed charity in us; charity of all sorts; charity in giving, charity in forgiving, charity in judging and censuring of men.

1. It should incline us freely to impart our goods, and to contribute our endeavours, for the relief of our poor neighbour; for that the last judgment will in especial manner proceed upon a regard to the performance or the neglect of this duty: it shall be the test of piety, and a ground of recompense at the last day: to charitable persons, who had relieved him in his poor brethren and members, our Lord himself telleth us, that he will say, *Because I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me; therefore, Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*[y] To them who contrarily had neglected to succour and comfort their poor brethren, he will pronounce the contrary doom, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat*,[z] &c. And what argument can there be imagined more forcible to engage us on the practice of this duty?

2. It should likewise dispose us readily to forgive all injuries and discourtesies received from any man: for since we shall at that trial need abundance of favour and mercy from God, we should in

* Quam angusta innocentia est, ad legem bonum esse, quanto latius officiorum patet, quam juris regula?—*Sen. de Ir.* ii. 27.

[u] Luke xii. 48. [v] 1 Thess. iv. 6.
[w] 2 Cor. vi. 9. [x] Job xxxiv. 22.
[y] Matt. xxv. 35. [z] Matt. xxv. 41.

all reason and duty be willing to show the like to others for God's sake and at his command; especially since he hath appointed the doing so for an indispensable condition, without which we shall not receive mercy or pardon from him; so that infallibly, if we will be rigorous and hard to others in this case, we must expect the like extremity and severity from God; for the laws and rules of God's proceeding then are these: *He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will God forgive you your trespasses:*[a] and by a lively example, in way of history or parable, our Lord in the Gospel hath expressed what words (in case of our refusing to remit to our neighbour his debts and trespasses against us) we shall hear, what usage we shall find at that day: *O thou wicked servant* (will God say to any such unmerciful person of us), *I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And the Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.*[b]

3. It likewise serveth to restrain us from all undue, all rash and harsh censure concerning the persons, the actions, the state of our neighbour; whereby we do invade our Lord's office, making ourselves judges in his room; whereby we usurp his right, exercising jurisdiction over his subjects; whereby we arrogate to ourselves his attributes who alone is able to know and judge rightly: *Why* (saith St. Paul) *dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? we shall all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ;*[c] it is the office of Christ, which we must not encroach upon: and, *Who art thou* (doth he again expostulate) *that judgest another's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.*[d] We wrong our Lord, in assuming authority over his servants; we wrong our brethren, in making ourselves their masters: and, *Judge nothing before the time* (saith the same apostle), *until the Lord come, who shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of hearts.* We blind wretches in effect do make ourselves gods, and sacrilegiously assert his incommunicable perfections to ourselves, when we presume to search the hearts, or pretend to know the secret intentions of our brethren. Again, *There is* (saith another apostle) *one Lawgiver, who can save or destroy: who art thou that judgest another?*[e] that is, how intolerably rash, unjust, and arrogant art thou, who seatest thyself upon God's tribunal, and thence dost adventure to pronounce doom upon his people! Did we indeed well consider this judgment, we should rather think it advisable to be mindful of our own case, than to pass sentence upon that of others; observing how liable ourselves are, we should scarce have the heart to carp at others; finding what great need our actions will then have of favourable interpretation, we should surely be more candid and mild in censuring other men's actions; especially considering, that by harsh judgment of others we make our own case worse, and inflame our reckoning; we directly thence incur guilt, we aggravate our own offences, and render ourselves inexcusable; we expose ourselves upon that score to condemnation: for, *With what judgment we judge, we shall be judged; and with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again,* our Lord doth say:[f] and, *Inexcusable* (saith St. Paul) *thou art, O man, whoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself:*[g] and, μὴ στενάζετε κατ' ἀλλήλων, *Do not* (saith St. James) *grudge* (or make moanful complaint) *against one another, lest you be condemned: behold, the Judge standeth before the doors.*[h]

7. It serveth also to support and comfort us, as against all other wrongful dealing, so against injuries of this kind; against all unjust and uncharitable censures, groundless slanders and surmises, undeserved scorns and reproaches of men; for that assuredly at that judgment right will be done to him that suffereth in this kind; his innocence will be cleared, his good name will be vindicated and re-

[a] James ii. 13; Matt. vi. 15.
[b] Matt. xviii 32.
[c] Rom. xiv. 10.
[d] Rom. xiv. 4.
[e] James iv. 12.
[f] Matt. vii. 2; Luke vi. 37.
[g] Rom. ii. 1, 3.
[h] James v. 9.

paired; *God will bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noonday;*[i] whence, approving his conscience to God in well-doing, he may cheerfully say with St. Paul, *With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment:*[j] *If our heart do not condemn us*, we may (whatever the opinions or discourses of man be concerning us) have a cheerful *boldness* and comfortable hope in regard to God:[k] the obloquy of men is a part of that cross which every good man here is appointed to bear, and assuredly shall meet with;* for the devil and the world do nothing, if they cannot by impudent assaults dash, or by malicious suggestions blast, the practice of goodness: but this consideration may easily raise us to bear it with patience, or with resolution to surmount it; it thence appearing that it nowise can harm us; for if God is our judge, what can the fancies or the tattles of men concern us? *I will not fear the judgment of men, who shall have God for my judge*, was with good reason said by St. Jerome.†

8. It upon the like ground should preserve us from being deluded and poisoned by the more favourable opinions of men. There are visibly two great rocks, upon which frequently men do split, and make shipwreck of good conscience; compliance with the practice, and regard to the opinions of others. Men out of complaisance accompany others in doing ill;‡ it is called good-nature, it is deemed good manners, to do it; so very civilly and genteelly, very nobly and gallantly, they go on to perdition, giving up their salvation, in compliment and courtesy to one another: then it is but natural for this most debonnair and generous dealing to requite one another with good words at least, or with some demonstrations of esteem; and it is no less natural for those who are thus flattered, to comply with the opinions of others, and to judge of themselves accordingly, thinking themselves good because they are called so:* but to keep ourselves from being upon such occasions, or upon any the like grounds, perniciously cozened, we should consider, that in the great judgment the esteem of men will import nothing of advantage to us; things will pass there as they are in themselves, not as they are rated here; according to real truth and intrinsic worth, not according to the conceits or affections of ignorant and partial men: even the things that appear fairest here, may prove foul there; persons much approved and applauded now, may then be condemned and rejected; for *God seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* God then will *search the hearts and weigh the spirits of men;*[l] he will scan their designs and intentions; he will closely examine their tempers, and exactly poise their circumstances; he will consider many things inscrutable to men, upon which the true worth of persons and real merit of actions do depend; wherefore most vain and unsafe it is to rely upon the uncertain opinions of men, or to please ourselves with them; they neither can out of blindness, or will out of passion, interest, partiality, judge truly.

9. If we desire to judge reasonably about ourselves, or to know our true state, the only way is to compare our hearts and lives with the law of God, judging ourselves by that rule according to which God will judge us. If we find in our hearts the love of God and goodness (sincere, although imperfect;) if we perceive ourselves disposed to keep God's commandments (to live piously, righteously, and soberly in this world;) then may we have a satisfactory hope concerning our state; then *we may* (as St. John saith) *have confidence toward God, because we*

* Κἂν πάντες δικάζωσιν, ὁ δὲ δικαστὴς ἀποψηφίζηται, οὐδεὶς μοὶ λόγος τῆς ἐκείνων ψήφου, κἂν ἅπαντες ἐπαινέσωσι καὶ θαυμάσωσιν, ἐκεῖνος δὲ μὲ καταδικάζῃ, οὐδὲν μοὶ πάλιν ὄφελος τῆς ἐκείνων κρίσεως.—Chrys. tom. viii. p 98.

† Non timebo hominum judicium, habiturus judicem Deum.—*Hier.*

‡ Nihil omnino agimus, qui nos per exempla multitudinis defendimus, et ad consolationem nostram aliena sæpe numerantes vitia, deesse nobis dicimus, quos debeamus sequi.—*Hier.*

[i] Psal. xxxvii. 6. [j] 1 Cor. iv. 3.
[k] 1 John iii 21.

* Quæ est Hæc tanta levitas animi, quæ tanta vanitas, relicta propria conscientia alienam opinionem sequi, et quidem fictam atque simulatam, rapi vento falsæ laudationis gaudere ad circumventionem suam, et illusionem pro beneficio accipere?—*Hier. ad Celantiam.*

[l] 1 Sam. xvi. 7; John vii. 24; Isa. xi. 3; Prov. xvi. 2; 1 Sam. ii. 3; Psal. ciii. 14.

keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing to him:[m] but if we do not find that mind in us, and that practice, we, in conceiting well of ourselves upon any other grounds, do but flatter and impose upon ourselves; if all the world should account us good, and take us to be in a good case, we should not at all believe them, or mind them; for, *Let no man deceive us; he that doeth righteousness, he* (and he alone) *is righteous*, is the most faithful advice and unquestionable sentence of St. John.[n] It is therefore (that by resting on such false bottoms we be not abused, and drawn thence to neglect the amendment of our hearts and ways, in order to our final account) a duty incumbent on us thus to search our hearts and try our ways, and accordingly to judge ourselves: the doing which with care and conscience would dispose us to prepare for the judgment we speak of; for, *If* (saith St. Paul) *we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged*, or not condemned.[o]

10. The consideration of this point will guard us from infidelity and from impatience in regard to the providential dispensation of affairs here: considering it, we shall not be offended at passages otherwise unaccountable and scandalous to Providence; we shall not wonder that so many disorders occur in the world; that right is perverted, that fraud and violence do prevail, that vice doth reign: we shall not complain of the adversities incident to good men, nor repine at the prosperities of bad men; we shall not be dissatisfied with any event here befalling ourselves or others; since from hence it doth most evidently appear, that all these things are consistent with the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God, and do assuredly tend to the declaration of those glorious attributes; yea, that consequently the worst accidents here, if we are faithful to God and to ourselves, will finally conduce to our advantage and benefit, according to that of the apostle, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*[p]

11. In fine, there is no consideration able to promise so much efficacy toward the rousing our passions, or duly ordering and setting them upon religious practice. It especially is apt to set on work those two grand engines and mighty springs of activity, hope and fear; and with them to raise their respective companions, joy and grief: for how, if we have been very culpable in the transgression or neglect of our duty, can we reflect on this point without being seized with an hideous dread of coming to so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a sentence? how can we think of it without a bitter remorse? Hard as rocks surely we must be, if such thoughts do not pierce us; utterly dead and senseless must our hearts be, if they do not feel the sting of such considerations; more stupid and stony we then are, than the dissolute Felix,[q] who could not without affrightment hear a plain discourse concerning the judgment to come; yea, more inconsiderate and insensible we appear, than those obstinate sons of darkness, the devils themselves, who *believe and tremble thereat.*[r]

If, on the other hand, we are conscious to ourselves of having seriously and carefully endeavoured to please God, and obey his commandments, how can we think of it without a comfortable hope of finding mercy and favour in that day! If in our hearts we can say with St. Paul, *I have combated the good combat, I have finished* (or I have continued) *the race, I have kept the faith;* then may we hopefully say after him, as he said confidently before us, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render unto me.*[s] If by virtue of *the saving grace of God*, which *hath appeared to all men*, and according to its holy instructions we have *denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously, and piously, in this present world;* then may we joyfully *expect the blessed hope, and the appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*[t] then may we indeed heartily wish, cheerfully hope, and earnestly pray for that day; doing which is the character, and

[m] 1 John iii. 21, 22.
[n] 1 John iii. 7; 1 Cor. iv. 4.
[o] 1 Cor. iii. 31; Gal. vi. 3; Psal. lxxvii. 6, 10.
[p] Rom. viii. 28.
[q] Acts xxiv. 25; Ἔμφοβος γενόμενος.
[r] James ii. 29.
[s] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; i. 18.
[t] Tit. ii. 12, 13.

hath been the practice of the best men: *the Lord* (saith St. Paul) *will render the crown of righteousness to all them who love his appearance;* and, *Looking for and hastening to the presence of the day of God*, saith St. Peter, intimating the practice of the primitive Christians; and, *Yea, come, O Lord Jesus*, is St. John's petition in the close of the Revelation, and may be the prayer of those who have the like conscience and affections with him.[u]

I conclude, wishing and exhorting that the meditation of this most important affair may be continually present to our minds; that we may seem, with that devout man, always to hear the last trump sounding in our ears, and through our hearts; that so with a pious awe and with a well-grounded hope we may expect *the coming of our Lord*, and may *love his appearance:* that from hence, being effectually restrained from all impious and vicious conversation, being induced to a circumspect and watchful pursuit of all piety and virtue, guiding our lives *inoffensively in all good conscience toward God and man*, we may in the end be able to render a good account, and with comfort inexpressible may at that day, from the mouth of our Judge, hear those happy words, *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy; Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Unto the possession whereof, Almighty God, in his infinite mercy, by the grace of his holy Spirit, vouchsafe to bring us, through the merits of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.[v] Amen.

[u] 1 Cor. i. 7; Phil. iii. 20; Tit. ii. 9; 2 Tim. iv. 8; 2 Pet. iii. 12; Rev. xxii. 20.
[v] 1 Thess. v. 23.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

SERMON XXXIV.

THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

1 Cor. iii. 16.—*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

My purpose is at this time, for our edification in Christian knowledge concerning that grand object of our faith and author of our salvation, the Holy Ghost; and for arming us against erroneous opinions about him, such as have been vented in former ages, and have been revived in this; to explain briefly the name, nature, and original of the Holy Ghost (according to what appears discovered of him in the sacred writings;) to consider also the peculiar characters, offices, and operations, which (according to the mysterious economy revealed in the gospel) are assigned and attributed to him; so that incidentally by testimonies of scripture, and arguments deduced thence, I shall assert the principal doctrines received in the church, in opposition to the most famously heterodox dogmatists that have appeared. For the doing which, this text of St. Paul doth minister good occasion: for the full explication thereof doth require a clearing of the particulars mentioned, and itself affordeth good arguments against the principal errors about this matter. His being called the Spirit of God, may engage us to consider his nature and original; his being said to dwell in us, doth imply his personality; his divinity appears in that Christians are called the temple of God, because the Holy Ghost dwelleth in them; his sanctifying virtue may be inferred from his constituting us temples by his presence in us. I shall then in order prosecute the points mentioned; and lastly shall adjoin somewhat of practical application.

1. First, then, for the name of the Holy Spirit; whereby also his nature and origin are intimated.

Of those things which do not immediately incur our sight, but do by conspicuous effects discover their existence, there is scarce anything in substance more pure and subtile, in motion more quick

and nimble, in efficacy more strong and powerful, than wind (or spirit.) Hence in common use of most languages the name of *wind* or *spirit* doth serve to express those things which from the subtilty or tenuity of their nature being indiscernible to us, are yet conceived to be moved with great pernicity, and to be endued with great force; so naturalists, we see, are wont to name that which in any body is most abstruse, most agile, and most operative in *spirit.* Hence it comes that this word is transferred to denote those substances which are free of matter, and removed from sense, but are endued (as with understanding, so) with a very powerful activity and virtue. Even among the pagans these sort of beings were called *spirits:* the souls of men are by them so termed; (*anima* hath its derivation from ἄνεμος, *wind.*) *Our life* (saith Cicero) *is contained by* (or comprised in) *body and spirit:** and, *We* (saith he again) *are at the same time received into the light, and endued with this heavenly spirit,*† that is, with our soul. Particularly the Stoics used to apply this name to our soul: *I allege the Stoics* (saith Tertullian) *who call the soul a spirit, almost* therein agreeing *with us* Christians.‡ They likewise frequently did attribute this appellation to God:

——Cœlum et terram camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum terræ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus agit.—— *Æn.* vi.

said the prince of their poets: by the word *spirit*, understanding (as Lactantius and Macrobius do interpret him) God himself, that pierceth and acteth all things;[1] yea he so otherwhere expounded his own mind, when he to the same purpose sings,

—— Deum ire per omnes
Terrasque tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum.
Georg. iv.

And the Orator, in his Dialogues, maketh Balbus to speak thus: *These things truly could not, all the parts of the world so conspiring together, be so performed, if they were not contained* (or kept together) *by one divine and continued spirit:** and Seneca clearly; *God* (saith he) *is nigh to thee, he is with thee, he is in thee: I tell thee, O Lucilius, a holy Spirit resideth within us, an observer and guardian of our good and our bad things* (or doings), *who, as he hath been dealt with by us, so he dealeth with us; there is no good man* (or no man is good) *without God:*† and Zeno defined God thus: *God is a Spirit, passing through the whole world:*‡ Posidonius also more largely; *God is an intellectual and fiery Spirit, not having shape; but changing into what things he will, and assimilated to all things.*§

In like manner hence the holy scriptures, with regard to our capacity and manner of conceiving, do with the same appellation adumbrate all those kind of substances void of corporeal bulk and concretion; human souls, all the angelical natures, and the incomprehensible Deity itself. And to God indeed this name is attributed to signify his most simple nature and his most powerful energy; but to other substances of this kind it seemeth also assigned to imply the manner of their origin, becaue God did by a kind of spiration produce them: for which cause likewise (at least in part) we may suppose that the holy scripture doth more signally and in a peculiar manner assign that name to one Being, that most excellent Being which is the subject of our present discourse: the which is called the Spirit of God (that is, of God the Father, who by reason of his priority of nature is often called God, in a personal signification;) the good Spirit of God; the Spirit of Christ; the Holy Spirit; and often absolutely, in way of excellence, the Spirit.

The same is also called the power or

* Vita corpore et spiritu continetur.—*Cic. Or. pro Mar.*

† Eodem tempore suscipimur in lucem, et hoc cœlesti spiritu augemur.—*De Arusp. resp.*

‡ Stoicos allego, qui spiritum dicunt animam, pene nobiscum.—*Tert. de Anim.* 5.

[1] Lact. i. 5.

* Hæc ita fieri omnibus inter se continentibus mundi partibus profecto non possent, nisi ea uno, et divino continuato spiritu continerentur.—*De Nat. Deor* ii. p. 60.

† Prope est a te Deus, tecum est, intus est; ita dico, Lucili, sacer intra nos spiritus sedet, malorumque bonorumque nostrorum observator, et hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat; bonus vir sine Deo non est.—*Sen.* Ep. 41.

‡ Θεός ἐστι πνεῦμα, διῆκον δι' ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου.—Zeno.

§ Θεός ἐστι πνεῦμα νοερὸν, καὶ πυρῶδες, οὐκ ἔχον μορφὴν, μεταβάλλον δὲ εἰς ἃ βούλεται, καὶ ἐξομοιούμενον πᾶσιν.—Posid. apud Stob.

virtue of God: about the reason of which appellation we may briefly observe, that whereas in every intellectual being there are conceived to be three principal faculties, will, understanding, efficacy; and correspondent to these three perfections, goodness, wisdom, power; a certain one of these (according to that mystical economy or husbandry of notions, whereby the manner and order of subsisting and operation proper to each person in the blessed Trinity is insinuated) is in a certain manner appropriated to each person (so I now by anticipation speak, being to warrant these terms hereafter;) namely, to the Father it is ascribed that he freely decreeth what things should be done; to the Son, that he disposeth them in a most wise method and order toward their effecting; to the Holy Ghost, that he with a powerful force doth execute and effect them: whence, as God is said, according to his pleasure, to decree and determine things [and τὸ θέλημα, the will, is a name by some writers assigned to him; particularly Ignatius doth in his Epistles frequently so style him; and so St. Paul may be understood, where he saith, *καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα, And thou knowest the will;* that is, knowest God the Father: and St. Peter, *For it is better that ye* (*εἰ θέλει τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ*), *if the will of God pleaseth, do suffer for well doing than for evil doing*,[b]] as the Son is called the wisdom of God, so the Holy Spirit is named *the power of God;*[c] his substantial power, as we shall show. To this Being, whatever it is, it is manifest that properly and primarily the name of Holy Spirit is appropriated; but (which we should consider) from thence (as is usual in other cases and matters) by figurative deflection of speech (or by metonymy), the manner of that operation which that Holy Spirit doth exert, his influence and efficacy, and also any sort of effects proceeding from him, do commonly assume or partake of this name. So when from this Spirit, in a very conspicuous manner, an excellent virtue of performing miraculous works was liberally imparted to the apostles, that virtue (or the manifest communication thereof, *the manifestation of the Spirit*, as St. Paul calleth it) is named the Holy Ghost; as when in St. John's Gospel it is said, *The Holy Spirit was not yet;*[d] that is, the apostles had not yet received that excellent gift; or that marvellous efficacy of the Holy Spirit had not yet discovered himself in them: as also when in the Acts some disciples are said *not to have heard whether there was any Holy Spirit;*[e] that is, they were not acquainted concerning that peculiar efficacy thereof. When also there are mentioned the spirit of prophecy, the spirit of revelation, the spirit of wisdom (which sort of spirits are said to be increased, to be taken away, to be quenched), it is plain that by those phrases, not the Holy Spirit of God itself (which in no sense is liable to such accidents), but gifts, fruits, or effects thereof, are denoted;[f] some of which sometime are in the plural number called *πνεύματα*, spirits; as when St. Paul enjoineth the Corinthians to be *zealous* (or earnestly desirous) *of spirits:* that is, of spiritual gifts, or graces, or revelations; and when *the discerning of spirits* (that is, of divine revelations, true or counterfeit) is said to be granted to some, and where *the spirits of prophets are* said to be subject or subordinate *to prophets*[g] (that is, one prophet had a right and ability to judge about the revelations made to another, or pretended to be so:) but these and the like figurative senses being excluded, we discourse about the Holy Spirit in its most proper and primary sense; as it is in and from God.

Which things being promised concerning the name of the Holy Spirit; for explication of his nature,

(II.) I. We do first assert, that it is a Being in some sense truly distinct from the Father and the Son; hereby rejecting the opinion of Sabellius, Noetus, Hermogenes, and Praxeas; which confounding the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and destroying their substantial properties, did of them all make but one person, under several names;† affirming *ἐν μιᾷ ὑποστάσει τρεῖς ὀνομασίας*, in one person three

[b] Rom. ii. 18; 1 Pet. iii. 17.

[c] Luke i. 35; xxiv. 49.

* Ὡς μήτε τὴν Σαβελλίου νόσον χώραν λαβεῖν, συγχεουμένων τῶν ὑποστάσεων, εἴτουν τῶν ἰδιοτήτων ἀναιρουμένων.—Patres Conc. Constant. Epist. ad Conc. Rom. Theod. v. 9.

[d] 1 Cor. xii. 7; John vii. 39.

[e] Acts xix. 2.

[f] Rom. viii. 5; Eph. i. 7; 2 Kings ii. 9; 1 Thess. v. 19; 1 Cor. xii.; Gal. v. 22.

[g] 1 Cor. xiv. 12, 32; xii. 10.

appellations, and making *τὴν τριάδα συνακαφὴν*, the Trinity to be a coincidence, as Epiphanius speaks. [I said, truly distinct; for this word *distinction* is by the schoolmen conceived more commodiously applied to this mystery than others of near signification; those of *diversity* and *difference* seeming to intimate somewhat prejudicial to the unity of essence: *In divinis* (in the mystery of the Trinity) *we must* (saith Aquinas) *avoid the name of diversity and of difference, but we may use the name of distinction, because of the relative apposition:** which caution yet the ancient fathers do not so precisely observe; for sometimes in them, *πρόσωπον ἑτερότης* and *διαφορὰ* (the diversity and difference of the persons), sometimes also the word *διαίρεσις*, the division of them, do occur; although they seem more willingly to use the word *διάκρισις*, *distinction:* that which we simply affirm is, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *τοῖς ἰδιώμασι διακρίνονται*, are distinguished in properties, as Gregory Nyssen speaks; are *ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος*, as Gregory Nazianzen says; that is, truly more than in mere name or conception distinguished, by their properties and relations.]

The Holy Ghost is, I say, truly distinct from the Father and the Son: this we shall first show separately, then jointly, in regard to both.

He is distinguished from the Father; for,

1. He is called the *Spirit of the Father;* which relation surely is not devised by fancy, or wants a real foundation; and therefore its terms are truly distinct. 2. The Holy Spirit is said *ἐκπορεύεσθαι*, that is, to *go out*, or proceed from the Father:[h] he is therefore another from him: for a thing cannot be deemed really to proceed from another, from which it only is distinguished in name or conceit. 3. It is also said to be sent, conferred, given by the Father; which surely argueth some kind of true distinction. 4. Divers things are attributed to the Spirit, which do not well agree to the Father; as particularly that he appeared *εἴδει σωματικῷ*, *in a bodily form;*[i] that he descended and rested upon our Lord, the Baptist beholding him: *I saw* (saith St. John) *the spirit descending as a dove, and it abode on him.* But, God the *Father no man* (saith St. John) *ever saw;* nor, addeth St. Paul, *can any man see him.* 5. The Holy Spirit is our advocate with God, crying in our hearts, and interceding with the Father for us (*ὑπερεντυγχάνων*, saith St. Paul:) that office, that act, does manifestly suppose a true distinction.[j]

For like reasons he is also distinguished from the Son; for, 1. He is called the Spirit of the Son; and that relation implies a real ground. 2. He is by the Son; *ἰδοῦ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω*, *Behold* (saith our Lord) *I send him:* and, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*[k] 3. He descended upon Christ, and abode on him: he filled him, he led or acted him; he anointed him; by his operation Christ did assume flesh;[l] wherefore he is distinguished from the Son. 4. Christ plainly distinguishes between speaking against the Son, and blaspheming against the Holy Ghost; which supposes them two objects.[m] 5. The Holy Ghost is said to receive from the Son that which he should tell to Christ's disciples, and thence to glorify the Son.[n] 6. The Son did and suffered many things personally which cannot agree, and cannot be attributed to the Holy Ghost; as, that he was incarnated, and assumed man's nature; that he suffered, rose again, ascended into heaven. 7. He is expressly said to be distinct from the Son: *I* (saith he) *will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter.*[o] So separately may the Holy Spirit be showed distinct from each; and jointly in several places that distinction is signified. For to those

* In divinis vitare debemus nomen diversitatis, et differentiæ, possumus autem uti nomine distinctionis, propter oppositionem relativam.—*Thom.*

Δίδασκε τοσοῦτον εἰδέναι μόνον, μονάδα ἐν τριάδι προσκυνουμένην, παράδοξον ἔχουσαν καὶ τὴν διαίρεσιν, καὶ τὴν ἕνωσιν.—Naz. Or. 23.

Apud Aug. personæ sæpe diversæ dicuntur.

[h] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11, &c.; John xv. 26.

[i] John xiv. 26, 16; 1 Cor. ii. 12; Gal. iv. 6; Luke iii. 33.

[j] John i. 32, 33, 18; 1 John iv. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 16; Rom. viii. 26; Gal. iv. 6.

[k] Gal. iv. 6; Luke xxiv. 49; John xvi. 7.

[l] Luke iv. 1; John iii. 34.

[m] Luke xii. 10; Matt. xii. 32.

[n] John xvi. 14.

[o] John xiv. 16.

three, by a constant economy, a certain order is assigned, some proper offices and peculiar energies are ascribed, which it is not reasonable to think done without a real foundation: *By Christ* (saith St. Paul) *we have an access in one Spirit to the Father:*[p] why must we proceed by this circuit, in this certain method, if the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are only distinguished in name? Wherefore also doth the same apostle bless thus: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*[q] To what end also doth he distinctively assign a peculiar dispensation of operations to the Father, of ministries to the Son, of gifts to the Holy Ghost?[r] Wherefore likewise doth St. Peter ascribe our election to the Father predestinating, to the Son propitiating, to the Holy Ghost santificating? Doth it agree to the gravity, simplicity, and sicerity of the divine oracles, so in a perpetual tenor to propound those three, as three, diverse not only in name, but in reality, in manner of being, in manner of operation, if there be no other under all, but a nominal or national distinction? What would this be, but not only to yield us an occasion, but to impose a necessity of erring? Shall we think those principal masters of truth purposely argute, perplexed, and obscure in their speech? Furthermore, St. John affirms in his First Epistle (at least, if there the text be authentic), that *there are three which bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;*[s] the which also, undoubtedly (although not so conjoinedly as in his Epistle), he assures in his Gospel; for, *I am he* (saith Christ) *who bear witness of myself, and the Father which sent me beareth witness of me;* and, *When the Comforter shall come, he will bear witness of me:*[t] so there are, we see, three witnesses, which our Lord appealeth to: but three names (as for instance, Marcus, Tullus, Cicero,) or the same thing having three names, will not constitute three witnesses. In fine, the form of baptism evinceth this distinction: for at our baptism we profess to acknowledge the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; we perform worship, and promise obedience to them all; which doing Sabellius would have us do, as if subjects should be required to oblige their faith to Caius, Julius, and Cæsar; which kind of proceeding it seems absurd to suppose that God should solemnly institute. This may be sufficient to overthrow the Sabellian error.

II. Again, we affirm the Holy Spirit to be a person. By a person we understand a singular, subsistent, intellectual being; or (as Boethius defines it), *an individual substance of a rational nature.** The Greek writers use the word ὑπόστασις (which word being of wider signification, doth comprehend also things void of understanding, importing) substance, concretely taken, or a thing subsistent (τὸ ἐνυπόστατον), which term is extant even in the scripture, where the Son of God, in respect to his Father, is called χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ (the character of his substance, or person:[u]) whence there was less cause that St. Jerome and other Latin ancient writers should so avoid, or timidly admit, the word *hypostasis;* as fearing that by use thereof they should seem to acknowledge three essences;[v] seeing, as St. Austin notes, according to most common acception, substance denoted the same with essence; *whence* (saith he) *we dare not say one essence, three substances; but one essence* (*or substance*), *three persons:* but this (as Gregory Nazienzen did consider) was nothing else but περὶ λεξιδίων ζυγομαχεῖν, *to contest about syllables;* or περὶ τὸν ἦχον μικρολογεῖν, *to mince about sounds;* seeing whether we call it either person or subsistence, we mean the same thing.† We, however, affirming the Holy Spirit to be a person, do thereby intend to exclude the opinion of Socinus and his followers, which asserts the Holy Spirit to be only an accident, or an accidental thing; to wit, a divine power, virtue, or efficacy, resident in God, or derived, from him.

[p] Eph. ii. 18. [q] 2 Cor. xiii. 13.
[r] 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6; 1 Pet. i. 2.
[s] 1 John v. 7. [t] John viii. 18; xv. 26.

* Rationalis naturæ individua substantia.

† Unde non audemus dicere unam essentiam, tres substantias, sed unam essentiam (vel substantiam) tres personas.—*Naz. Orat.* xxxix. 32.

[u] Heb. i. 2.
[v] Hier. Epist. ad Damas. Aug. de Trin. v. 8, 9.

1. Now this we persuade first from those things which we before did show concerning the distinction of the Father and the Holy Spirit; for that slender (or rather no) distinction such as may be conceived to be between any being and its efficacy (especially in this case, attending to the most simple nature of God, and his most simple manner of acting), doth not well reach the business, nor doth suffice to found that distinction which the scripture doth (as we showed) constitute between the Father and Holy Spirit. Indeed Socinus, as to this point (however it be that he sometime objecteth Sabellianism to the catholics), doth scarce himself differ from Sabellius; for Sabellius himself did avow the Son and Holy Spirit to be divers energies of the Father, and that they are distinguished from him, as light and heat from the sun; which did not hinder the Fathers from refuting him, as putting no true distinction between them; as indeed God in the thing itself (or beyond the manner of our conception and expression) is not distinguished from his power and efficacy.

2. Again, this may be collected from the very name of *Spirit*, the which primarily is imposed upon substances, both corporeal and incorporeal; belonging to God essentially understood, to angels, to human souls; all which things are substances: whence it is probable, that to the Being of which we treat, because it in like manner is a substance, this name of *Spirit* is assigned by God, the best author of words; the epithet *Holy* being adjoined for distinction sake. This is confirmed from that whereas *God* essentially *is a Spirit* (as is expressed in St. John's Gospel), his efficacy cannot aptly assume the same name;[w] as because our soul is essentially spirit, it were incongruous to call any virtue thereof a spirit. The same is further hence confirmed, for that the evil Spirit, which is opposed to the *good Spirit of God*, is not an efficacy of God, but a subsistent being; which argueth the good Spirit also to be likewise subsistent.[x] The same is corroborated from the apostle's comparing the Spirit of God to that spirit, which being in man, doth search and discern his inward counsels and purposes:[y] but the spirit of man is a substantial thing; wherefore it is intimated, that correspondently the Spirit of God is such a being. We add to these things, that power, virtue, efficacy, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit: *That you may* (saith St. Paul) *abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Ghost:*[z] but that power should be attributed unto power, or efficacy to efficacy, is not congruous.

3. The holy scripture (to whose speech it becometh us to suit our conceptions) doth commonly describe the Holy Spirit as a person, enjoying personal titles, offices, attributes, and operations; and those such which neither in sound or sense do agree to mere efficacy.

(1.) Speaking of the Holy Ghost, it purposely and carefully, as it were, doth accommodate the article agreeing to a person: not *it*, but *he*, is the article commonly assigned to the Spirit; and that with marks of doing it studiously: [a]*Οταν ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας*, *When he* (in the masculine gender) *comes, the Spirit of truth*, (in the neuter), it is said in St. John's Gospel: and, *Τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν*, *None* (in the masculine gender again) *knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God.*[a] Why, otherwise beside analogy of grammar, should the style be so tempered or inflected, but to insinuate the Holy Spirit's personality? If he were nothing else but the virtue of God, there were no need, or rather it would be inconvenient, so to phrase it.

(2.) Again, the scripture attributes personal offices to the Holy Spirit; the office of a master, (*He shall teach you;*) of a leader, or guide, (*He shall lead you into all truth;*) of a monitor, (*He shall bring all things to your remembrance;*) of a witness, (*He shall testify concerning me;*[b]) yea, which more strongly evinceth, of a legate, who declareth God's mind, not as from himself, but as deputed and furnished with instructions from the Father and the Son; *He shall not* (it is said) *speak from himself; but whatever things he shall hear, he shall speak; and he will tell you things to come: All thing that the Father hath are mine;*

[w] John iv. 24. [x] 1 Sam. xvi. 14. [y] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. [z] Rom. xv. 13, 19.
[a] John xvi. 13; xiv. 26; xv. 2, 6; 1 Cor. ii. 11.
[b] John xiv. 16; xvi. 13; xv. 26.

therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you:[c] which expressions do in no sort well agree to the divine power or efficacy; but evidently respect a person: for what is performed by any agent, to say that of its efficacy, as distinct from it, is beside the reason and manner of speech; and doth especially disagree with the nature and genius of the divine scripture, which undertaketh most simply and plainly to instruct us. That God's efficacy should be sent from the Father and Son; that it should speak, that it should hear from the Father and the Son; how strangely hard and obscure a manner of speaking is that! from them, not from himself: what *himself* can they imagine, who distinguish him not from God, and allow him no personality? why should we without necessity asperse the holy scripture, made clearly to instruct us, with such mistiness and darkness? Likewise to the Holy Spirit is attributed the office of a paraclete, or advocate, who pleadeth our cause with God, praying and interceding with God for us: but that God's efficacy (which can hardly be conceived, which should not be conceived, distinct from God) should speak to God, should interpose itself between us, is, as the rest, too perplexed and intricate a saying.[d]

(3.) Furthermore, the holy scripture doth to the Holy Spirit attribute faculties and operations annexed to him plainly personal: such are understanding, (*the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God: The things of God none knoweth, but the Spirit of God;*) will, (*He divideth to every one as he willeth;*) affections, of grief, (*Grieve not the Holy Spirit;*) and anger, (*They provoked his Holy Spirit;*) sense, (*what he shall hear, he will speak;*) speech, there and in many other places, (*It is not you*, saith our Saviour, *that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that is in you;* and, *The Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, whereunto I have called them;* and again, very emphatically, *While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.*[e]) Now these and the like faculties and acts are clearly personal; not representing any quality, or energy, but a lively and intellectual substance. To interpret all these things as spoken by fiction or dramatically, what is it but to transform God's oracles into Pythian riddles, and of theology to frame a mythology? That sometimes for emphasis sake, in matters less dark or high, the holy scripture may sometime use such schemes, nothing, I confess, doth hinder; but that perpetually it should involve such a most grave and sublime matter with such tortuous forms of speech, doth in truth not seem consentaneous to its most holy and simple majesty: as more simply, more clearly, and more intelligibly, so more compendiously, it might have been said, God knoweth, God willeth, God is thus or thus affected, God speaketh; than, God's virtue knoweth, God's power willeth, God's efficacy speaketh: if these manners of speech did not otherwise differ, at least the former would be more clear, simple, and expedite, nor would it so yield occasion to errors and doubts; and therefore more worthy it would be of the holy writ. However such prosopopœias should not be inept, but such as most appositely should agree to the matter proposed, which would not happen in this case: for of those personal attributes, some at least do scarce admit those figurate senses, or do plainly refuse them: it is hard to say that a divine power doth know or hear; and who will say that a divine efficacy is affected with anger or sorrow?

I add, that when the sin of blasphemy is said to be committed against the Holy Spirit, just in the same form of speech as against the Son, it is signified that the Holy Spirit is in the same manner a person as the Son is a person; otherwise the comparison would not seem to be well framed.

4. The Holy Spirit, in the same manner and by the like right as the Father and Son, is the object of our faith, worship, obedience; the which, as by divers other ways (as afterwards we may show), so especially doth appear from the form

[c] John xvi. 13, 15.
[d] Rom. viii. 26.

[e] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11; 2 Cor. xii. 11; John iii. 8; Eph. iv. 30; Isa. lxiii. 10; John xvi. 13; Matt. x. 20; Acts xiii. 2; x. 19.

of baptism instituted and prescribed by our Lord; where we as well are baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit, as of the Father and Son: wherein is signified, and by a solemn contestation ratified, on the part of God, that those three, joined and confederated, as it were, are conspiringly propitious and favourable to us; that they do receive us into their discipline, grace, and patronage; that they are ready, and by virtue of promise in a manner bound, to bestow on us, excellent benefits and privileges (on us, I say, performing the laws and conditions of the covenant then entered into;) on our part, that we do with sound and firm faith equally (that is, thoroughly and entirely) acknowledge and confess those three; that we repose an equal (that is, a most firm) hope and confidence in them; that we do most highly reverence all and each of them; that we do sincerely and seriously undertake and promise a perpetual (and, nearest to what we are able, a perfect) obedience to them: doing which things, we do (as Athanasius, or an ancient writer under his name, observeth) yield more than a simple adoration to the Holy Spirit: (*Since*, saith he, *they that are catechized in order to baptism, are not, before they are baptized, perfect Christians, but being baptized are consummated; baptism therefore imports more than adoration:**) hence who sees not in this first and principal mystery of our religion the Holy Spirit is exhibited to us as a person; that about him, as such, this excellent part of our duty, this eximious worship, is conversant? Attending to this point we may also see the adverse opinion to be urged with many inconveniences: for if the Holy Spirit be not a person, not aptly (or rather very incongruously,) he is put into the same rank with the other two Persons; not rightly are things so wholly different in kind (things subsistent and not subsistent) conjoined, and just in the same form proposed as like objects of worship; yea, superfluously and to no purpose doth the Holy Spirit seem to be adjoined, if by it nothing beside the divine efficacy is designed: for acknowledging the Father, we do withal acknowledge his power and efficacy, congruous to the divine nature; worshipping the Father, we do together adore his power; devoting ourselves in obedience to the Father, we do likewise subject ourselves to his power: as, if one hath promised faith and loyalty to the king, he therein hath abundantly satisfied his duty; so that there is no further need to profess himself devoted to the king's power or efficacy: who sees not that in such a case it is superfluous and idle to sever the king from his royal power? One may also ask, why with as good reason we should not be consecrated into the name of the divine goodness, of the divine justice, of the divine wisdom, or of any other divine attribute, as into the name of the divine power? The Socinian exposition therefore doth cast strange clouds and incongruities upon this august mystery: which yet in decency should be most clearly and simply propounded, lest in the very entrance of our Christian profession an occasion should be given of stumbling into great error.

5. The personality of the Holy Ghost is also perspicuously evinced, from its being represented under the visible shape of a subsistent thing. A substantial thing is no proper symbol or representative of a thing accidental, nor commodiously may assume its name: to a thing having no subsistence it doth not well suit to descend like a dove, and to rest upon Christ:* supposing the Spirit were only the efficacy of God the Father, seeing the effects of faculties and operations are most aptly attributed to the persons having or exerting them, it could have been said (and that more rightly and properly) that the Father himself did appear in a corporeal figure, that the father descended, that the Father sate upon Christ, that the Father was seen by the holy Baptist; the which it were rash to affirm.

I forbear to allege, that the Holy Spirit is reckoned among the three that bear witness in heaven; that the sin against the Holy Ghost is distinguished from the sin against God the Father.† I also pass

* Εἰ δὲ μὴ εἰσι τέλειοι Χριστιανοὶ οἱ κατηχούμενοι πρὶν ἢ βαπτισθῶσι, βαπτισθέντες δὲ τελειοῦνται· τὸ βάπτισμα ἄρα μᾶλλον ἔστι τῆς προσκυνήσεως.—Athan. Dial 1, contra Maced. p 265.

* Ἐν εἴδει σωματικῷ, in a bodily shape, as it is said in the gospel.

† Cur non hic accipiamus visibiliter insinuatam per creaturam visibilem Trinitatis æqualitatem, atque in tribus personis unum, eandemque substantiam.—Aug. de Trin ii 11, 12.

over, that a trinity of persons (as many of the Fathers conceive) was represented in the apparition to Abraham; where it is said, *The Lord appeared*, and *three men appeared to him*;[f] as also that the hymn (Trisagias) in Isaiah and the Apocalypse does insinuate it; likewise that the phrases, *Creveit Elohim* (*Gods* in the plural, *did create* in the singular; *Faciamus hominem, Let us make man*; *Jehovah Elohim, the Lord our Gods*; and the like, may well hither be referred.[g] For from what hath been said, the Socinian error may seem abundantly confuted.

III. We thirdly now do assert (supposing his personality) that the Holy Spirit is God, co-essential to God the Father and God the Son; or that the one divine nature (with all its attributes and perfections) is common to him with the Father; or that (which is the same) the Holy Spirit is God, that most high God, most absolutely and properly so called; (for, seeing the scriptures do frequently inculcate that there is but one God, if the Holy Spirit be God, he must necessarily be co-essential to the Father and the Son.) Now that he is God, we, against the Macedonians, or Semi-Arians, do assert, and by these arguments prove.

1. The most proper names of God and the most divine titles are everywhere (according to just interpretation and by perspicuous consequence) attributed unto the Holy Spirit: inasmuch as often (almost ever), upon various occasions, the same words, works, and acts, are referred to God and to the Holy spirit; so that whatever God is said to have spoken, to have performed, to have made, that also is reported said, transacted, produced by the Holy Ghost; and reciprocally, whatever doth any way regard the Holy Spirit, that is referred to God: the which doth argue that between the beings denoted by the names God and Holy Spirit, an essential identity or unity doth intercede. Of the Israelites being wickedly incredulous and refractory, it is said, *They tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies*: the same Isaiah thus expresseth; *They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit*.[h] In Isaiah (vi. 9.) God is said to send his prophets; St. Paul reporting it, saith the Holy Ghost sent them. St. Peter chargeth Annanias, that he had lied to the Holy Spirit; and thence that he had lied to God: *Annanias* (saith he) *Why, hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost?* presently he subjoins, *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God*: he plainly by those names designeth the same things, and more than intimates it to be the same thing to lie to God, and to lie to the Spirit.[i] Our Lord, as man, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and for that reason was the Son of God: *The Holy Ghost* (said the angel) *shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*:[j] what consequence were there of this, if the Holy Ghost is not God? Our Lord also is said to have performed his miracles by the power of God and by the power of the Holy Spirit indifferently: *If I* (saith he in St. Matthew) *by the spirit of God cast out devils*: in St. Luke he saith, *If I by the finger* (that is, by the power) *of God cast out devils*:[k] and both phrases St. Paul doth equipollently express by *the power of the Holy Ghost*: and St. Peter says, that *God did the miracles by him*.[l] The holy scripture, because dictated by the Holy Spirit, is said to be θεόπνευστος, or inspired by God. The *Spirit spake in the prophets*, saith St. Peter, and the other holy writers commonly; *God spake in them*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews;[m] and others likewise so often as the holy scripture is called the word of God. The Holy Spirit *doth shed abroad* and work *charity in our hearts*; we are thence said to be θεοδίδακτοι, taught by God to love one another;[n] yea every virtue, all holiness, is promiscuously ascribed to God and the Holy Ghost as its immediate authors: *To be led by the Spirit of God*, and, *God worketh in us to will and to do*, do signify the same thing.[o] Every faithful Christian is therefore called a temple (that is, a place con-

[f] Gen xviii. 1.
[g] Isa. vi. 3; Rev. iv. 8; Deut. vi. 4.
[h] Psal. lxxviii. 56; Isa. lxiii. 10.
[i] Acts xxviii. 25; v. 3, 4.
[j] Luke i. 35.
[k] Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20.
[l] Rom. xv. 19; Acts ii. 22.
[m] 2 Tim. iii. 16; 1 Pet. i. 11; Heb. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 21; Luke i. 70, &c.
[n] Rom. v. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 8, 9.
[o] Rom. viii. 14; Phil. ii. 13.

secrated to God), because the Holy Spirit in a special manner is present in him: *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* saith St. Paul in our text;[p] know ye not that ye are God's temple? whence should we know it? from hence, that God's Spirit inhabiteth you; because the inhabitation of the Spirit is the same with the inhabitation of God. The same apostle again: *In whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit;*[q] for an habitation of God in the Spirit; that is therefore an habitation of God, because the Spirit dwelleth in you: how could the divinity of the Holy Spirit be more expressly declared? We may add, that St. Paul calleth the Holy Spirit, Lord, ὁ δὲ Κύριος τὸ Πνεῦμά ἐστι. *But the Lord is that Spirit;*[r] which Spirit, in the words immediately following, is called *the Spirit of the Lord;* the which also before, as St. Chrysostom noteth, is called *the Spirit of the living God:* the Spirit therefore of the Lord is the Lord himself, unto whom the Jews, when the veil covering their minds is taken off, shall return. (Lastly, St. John affirms *the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to be one;* and therefore the Holy Ghost is God.[s])

Hence (for corollary to this argument) we see how we may retund the importunity of the Macedonians, who did nothing but ask where in scripture the Holy Ghost is called God: where, say you, is he called God?[t] where not? say I: almost everywhere he in effect is so called: seeing when all about in the same deed, or in the same history, the same words and acts are reported of Cæsar and of the Emperor, it may rightly be pronounced, that Cæsar is there called Emperor; which no man, I suppose, will contradict. The case is here plainly the same between the Holy Spirit and God.

2. To the Holy Spirit are most expressly attributed all the incommunicable perfections of God; the essential characters and properties of the divine nature. The very epithet of *holy* (absolutely, in way of excellence characteristically put) is one of them: for, as it is in Hannah's song, *There is none holy as the Lord; neither is there any beside thee:*[u] there is none beside God absolutely and perfectly holy (that is, by a most remote distance severed from all things, far exalted above all things, peculiarly venerable and august in majesty), whence ὁ ἅγιος, *the Holy one*, is a distinctive title of God. Yea, the name of *spirit* itself (absolutely and eminently put, and so importing highest purity and perfectest actuality) doth seem to imply the same. Also eternity, immensity, omniscience, omnipotency (than which no more high perfections, or more proper to God, can be conceived), are attributed to the Holy Spirit. Eternity; for the apostle to the Hebrews calls him αἰώνιον Πνεῦμα, *the eternal Spirit;* (*How much more* (saith he) *shall the blood of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience?*[v]) Immensity; *Whither* (saith the Psalmist) *shall I go from thy Spirit? and whither shall I fly from thy face?*[w] the question involveth a negation; and signifieth a manifest reason thereof: I cannot fly any whither from thy Spirit, because it is everywhere present. Omniscience; *The Spirit* (saith St. Paul) *doth search all things* (that is, it perfectly comprehendeth all things), *even the deep things of God;*[x] τὰ βάθη, *the depths*, or deepest things of God, and consequently all things which God knows, or can be known), even those things, which to comprehend doth as far exceed the condition of a creature, as it goeth beyond the capacity of one man to discern the cogitations and affections of another man; for such a comparison St. Paul doth make: our Saviour in the gospel saith (*None knoweth who is the Son but the Father; nor who is the Father but the Son:*[y] but the Holy Spirit did questionless know who was the Father, and who the Son: he had a knowledge therefore most divine and incommunicable.) Particularly to the Holy Spirit is assigned the knowledge of future contingencies; which knowledge is peculiarly high and most proper to God, and is therefore called divination; the which peculiarly is appropriated to

[p] 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Rom. viii. 9.
[q] Eph. ii. 22.
[r] 2 Cor. iii. 17, &c.
[s] 1 John v. 7.
[t] Dial. advers. Maced. apud Athan.
[u] 1 Sam. ii. 2.
[v] Heb. ix. 14.
[w] Psal. cxxxix. 7.
[x] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.
[y] Luke x. 21.

the Holy Spirit, as its immediate principle; whence he is called *the Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of truth*:[z] and from him all the prophets are said to derive their foreknowing power. To these may be adjoined other no less divine attributes of the Holy Spirit; as *independency* in will and operation; for, *All these things* (saith St. Paul, that is, the production of those excellent graces, the distribution of those wonderful gifts) *doth one and the same Spirit work, dividing to every one as he willeth.*[a] And as the *wind bloweth where it willeth*, nor can be determined or hindered by any thing, so (as our Lord insinuates in the gospel) the Holy Spirit according to his pleasure worketh everywhere.*[b] Absolute goodness which belongeth only to God; (for, *There is none good but one, God himself;*) but, *Thy Spirit* (saith the Psalmist) *is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.*[c] Most absolute veracity (which also doth imply both perfect knowledge and extreme goodness), the which is signified by the title of truth abstractedly assigned to him: *It is* (saith St. John) *the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth;*[d] that is, most absolutely and perfectly veracious. In fine, omnipotency doth belong to the Holy Spirit, as by his works doth appear, which we shall immediately propound in the next argument. for,

3. Most divine operations (transcending the power of any created thing) are ascribed to the Holy Ghost: such are; To create things, and make the world; for it was the Spirit which, resting upon the unshapen mass, did hatch the world: *By his Spirit* (saith Job) *he hath garnished the heavens:* [and, *By the word of the Lord* (saith the Psalmist) *were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth*, or by his Spirit:] *But he* (as the apostle to the Hebrews saith) *who made all things is God.* To conserve things; *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth*, saith the Psalmist,[e] speaking about the continued production, or conservation of things. Particularly to produce man, both at first and continually: for the soul of the protoplast was derived from the Spirit of God; and good Elihu professeth of himself, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life;*[f] yea (which worthily may be deemed somewhat greater and more difficult), to create men again, or renew them, being marred and deformed, unto the image of God (quickening a man's spirit in a manner dead, enlightening his blind mind, reforming his perverse affections;) which to effect, as it is ascribed to God, so also to the Holy Spirit, in places numberless.[g] Also (which is connected with that) to justify a man, to remit sins (not ministerially, but, which is proper to God, principally and absolutely;) for, *ye are* (saith St. Paul) *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* To animate the church by his influence, to govern it by his power and guidance, to prescribe laws unto it, to set rulers over it, to dispense gifts and graces requisite for the building, propagation, and preservation thereof, are works of his, and together the most proper and principal works of divine power.[h] To perform miracles, that is, works contrary or superior to the laws of nature, and therefore only congruous to God; the doing of which is peculiarly attributed to God's Spirit; particularly to raise the dead, which is the highest of miracles: *If* (saith St. Paul) *he that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*[i] In fine, there is no work, either of nature, or of providence, or of grace, so sublime, or so difficult, which is not ascribed to the efficacy of the Holy Spirit; the which doth show his sovereign authority and his al-

* Εἰ μὴ ἦν τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ μόνου ἀγαθοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, οὐκ ἂν ἀγαθὸν ἐκλήθη, ὁπότε Κύριος παρητεῖτο τὸ καλεῖσθαι ἀγαθός, καθὸ ἄνθρωπος γέγονε.—Athan. contra Apoll. tom. i. p. 607.

[z] Eph. iii. 5; i. 17; Rev. xix. 10; John xv. 26.

[a] 1 Cor. xii. 11. [b] John iii. 8.

[c] Matt. xix. 17; Psal. cxliii. 10; Neh. ix. 20.

[d] 1 John v. 6.

[e] Job xxvi. 13; Psal. xxxiii. 6; Heb. iii. 4; Psal. civ. 30. [f] Job xxxiii. 4.

[g] Ἡ κτίσις οὐκ ἁγιάζει κτίσιν. Bas.; Eph. iv. 24; ii. 10; 2 Cor. iv. 6; v. 17; Col. iii. 10; Tit. iii. 5; Luke v. 21.

[h] 1 Cor. vi. 11; Rom. viii. 2; Tit. iii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Acts xv. 28; xx. 28; Eph. iv. 11; 1 Cor. xii.; Heb. ii. 4.

[i] Rom. viii. 11.

mighty power: for surely by no more plain and cogent arguments than by these, can the omnipotence of the supreme Deity itself be demonstrated.

4. The divine majesty of the Holy Spirit may also be asserted from the divine worship which is duly to be yielded to him. It by God's appointment is yielded to him, when being solemnly baptized in his name we do profess to place our faith and hope upon him, we do protest our reverence and obedience to him. The same is then exhibited, when, according to the rule of St. Paul, together with the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God the Father, we implore the communion of the Holy Spirit.[j] The same is not obscurely signified, whenever (that which often occurs), in the execution of divine (most excellent and admirable) offices and works, the Holy Ghost is put in conjunction and co-ordination with the Father and the Son: for that by God, most jealous and curious, as it were, for his honour (who more than once professeth that he will not *impart his glory to another*), should be allowed to any creature, to march in even rank, to seem advanced to an equal pitch of dignity with himself, is nowise credible, or agreeable to reason.[k]

(*What communion can there be between a creature and his Creator? Why should that which is made be numbered together with his Maker, in the performing of all things?* saith St. Athanasius well.*) Moreover, what dignity belongs to the Holy Spirit, what reverence is due to him, appears clearly from that the blasphemy against him is peculiarly unpardonable, whenas the faults committed against God the Father, and obloquy against the Son, are capable of remission: for the nature of things doth scarce bear, that to detract from a creature should be a crime so capital, or receive such aggravation; it cannot well be conceived that the honour of a creature should in such a manner be preferred to the honour of God himself. (*How*, saith St. Ambrose, *can any one dare to reckon the holy Ghost among creatures? or who doth so render himself obnoxious, that if he derogate from a creature, he may not suppose it to be relaxable to him by some pardon?*†)

5. Again, whereas Christ, even as a man, is elevated in dignity and eminence above all creatures (*above every name, far above all principality, authority, and power*, as the apostle teaches us), he is yet in that respect inferior, and gives place to the Holy Spirit.[l] For as such he did receive his nature from the Holy Spirit:† *That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost*, saith the evangelist; and, *More honour than the house hath he that made it*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews. Christ was sent by the Holy Spirit: *The Lord God* (saith the prophet of him) *and his spirit hath sent me.*[m] But, *The apostle* (saith he himself) *is not greater than he that sent him;* the *sent* is not greater, that is, by a λιτότης, or μείωσις, the figure of diminution) he is inferior to the *sender*.[n] Christ was consecrated and inaugurated into his offices by the Holy Spirit: *The Spirit of the Lord* (foretold Isaiah of Christ, as the evangelists interpret) *is upon me, because he hath anointed me:* but, *Without controversy, the lesser is blessed by the greater*, saith the apostle. Christ was by the Holy Ghost endowed with excellent gifts abundantly and beyond measure; but, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*, is an aphorism out of our Lord's own mouth:[o] in fine, our Lord did by virtue of the Holy Spirit perform miracles; by the eternal Spirit he offered himself to God; by the Spirit he was raised from the dead: which things are manifest arguments that the Holy Spirit doth excel Christ as man: wherefore seeing beside God only, nothing is in worth or dignity superior to Christ, it ne-

* Ποία γὰρ κοινωνία τῷ κτίσματι πρὸς κτιστήν; διά τι τὸ πεποιημένον συναριθμεῖται τῷ ποιήσαντι εἰς τὴν τῶν πάντων τελείωσιν;—Athan. Orat. in Ar.

Ἀσεβὶς οὖν ἐστι λέγειν κτιστὸν, ἢ ποιητὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁπότε πᾶσα γραφὴ παλαιά τε καὶ καινὴ μετὰ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ συναριθμεῖ αὐτὸ, καὶ δοξάζει,—Id. περὶ ἐνσάρκου ἐπιφ. tom. i. p. 600.

[j] 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

[k] Isa. xlii. 8; xlviii. 11.

* Quomodo inter creaturas audet quisquam Spiritum S. computare? aut quis sic se obligat, ut si creaturam derogaverit, non putet sibi hoc aliqua venia relaxandum?—*Ambros.*

† Quomodo creatura dicitur, qui Domini Creator ex Maria comprobatur? *Aug. Serm.* vi. Matt. i. *de Temp.*

[l] Eph. i. 21; Phil. ii. 9.

[m] Matt i. 20; Heb. iii. 3; Isa. xlviii. 16.

[n] John xiii. 16.

[o] Isa. lxi. 1, 12; Luke iv. 18; Heb. vii. 7; John iii. 34; Luke iv. 1; ii. 40, 52; Acts xxi. 35; Matt. xii. 28; Heb. ix. 14; Rom. i. 4; viii. 11.

cessarily follows that the Holy Spirit is God.

6. I add, that whereas upon divers occasions the ranks and orders of creatures are mentioned in scripture (as where all the choir of them is summoned and cited to sing the praises of God; namely, the angels, the heavens, the earth, men, beasts, plants; when catalogues are recited of things made by Christ, and subject to him, among which angels, thrones, dominations, dignities, and powers, are mentioned), it is strange that this top of creatures (if a creature he be), this leader of the choir, should wholly be pretermitted.[p] It is very probable, that if the prophets had known, or the apostles had thought this, they would have not been silent about it; they would, as reason had required, have set him in the head of all; which if they had done, they would have exempted us from these scruples and errors in so high a point: but they could not do it, because indeed the Holy Spirit is not in the order of creatures: the which we do seem sufficiently to have proved.

To all the premised points no small accession of weight doth come from the authority of so many holy fathers and councils; and from the consent of the church, running down through so many ages; to oppose which, without very weighty and manifest reasons, doth as much recede from prudence, as it is far from modesty.

(III.) The next point we shall consider is the original of the Holy Spirit; the which we do assert to be in way of procession jointly from God the Father and God the Son; meaning hereby, that to this divine Person in a peculiar manner (incomprehensible indeed, and ineffable, but which in some manner by this term *procession* may be signified) the divine essence which he hath is communicated from the Father and the Son.

That the Holy Spirit is not from himself, as the Father is, is plain; for that being supposed, there would be more first principles than one, and consequently more Gods than one, which is contrary to the whole tenor of scripture: neither did any ever affirm so much.*

That he proceedeth from the Father, appeareth from that the Father is the fountain and first principle of all essence;[q] and by our Saviour the Spirit is said ἐκπορεύεσθαι, *to go out from the Father;* and he is called τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, *The Spirit that is out of God* (the Father) by St. Paul: and this is generally confessed.[r]

That also he doth proceed from the Son (which is by the modern Greeks denied) may be proved.

1. Because as he is called the Spirit of the Father, so he is also often styled the Spirit of the Son; which signifies he is in a like manner related to the Son as to the Father: and that both therefore in a like manner conspire to his production.[s]

2. He is said to be sent, as from the Father, so also from the Son. But mission and procession do not seem to differ, except in manner of speech (one more especially denoting the name whence, the other the act or effect of the same thing;) nor doth it agree to the Holy Spirit, who (as we have showed) is God, to go out, or be sent, otherwise than by reception of essence.

3. The Son saith of the Holy Spirit, ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήψεται, *He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you;* and, to the same purpose, *Whatsoever he shall hear, he shall speak;*[t] by which saying it is intimated that the Holy Spirit doth receive knowledge from the Son; the which, being God, he cannot otherwise do, than by receiving his essence from the Son.

4. The Holy Spirit is a Person third in order: seeing, then, the Son before him in order (in order, I say, not in time) obtaineth thy divine nature, so that when the Holy Spirit doth proceed, It is common to both Father and Son, he cannot receive it from the Father separately, or without also deriving it from the Son. Thus our Lord himself seemeth to have argued, when he saith, *All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.*[u]

5. Lastly, our Saviour, as St. Augustine and Cyril conceive, did signify this

* οὐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ λαλήσει, John xvi. 13.

[p] Psal. ciii. 148, &c.; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Col. i. 16; Eph. i. 21; Rom. viii. 38.

[q] Novat. de Trin. 31.

[r] John xv. 16; 1 Cor. ii. 12.

[s] Matt. x. 20; Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 9; 1 Pet. i. 11; Phil. i. 19.

[t] John xvi. 13, 14.

[u] John xvi. 15; xvii. 10.

procession from himself, when breathing on his disciples he said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*[v]

6. To these arguments may be added the consentient authority of the Latin Fathers, Hilary, Ambrose, Austin, and the rest; which explicitly teach this doctrine. Also the more ancient Greeks, Athanasius, Basil, both the Gregories, Epiphanius, Cyrillus Alexandrinus, do (although seldom expressly in terms, yet equipollently, and according to sense) say the same.*

(IV.) We proceed now to the peculiar offices, functions, and operations of the Holy Spirit: many such there are in an especial manner attributed or appropriated to him; which, as they respect God, seem reducible to two general ones; the declarations of God's mind, and the execution of his will: as they are referred to man (for in regard to other beings, the scripture doth not so much consider what he performs, it not concerning us to know it), are especially the producing in us all qualities and dispositions, the guiding and aiding us in all actions requisite or conducible to our eternal happiness and salvation: to which may be added, the intercession between God and man, which jointly respecteth both.

I. First, it is his especial work to declare God's mind to us; whence he is styled *the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation;* for that all supernatural light and wisdom have ever proceeded from him.† He instructed *all the prophets that have been since the world began*, to know, he enabled them to speak, the mind of God concerning things present and future. Holy men (that have taught men their duty, and led them in the way to bliss) were but his instruments, *speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*[w]

By his inspiration the holy scriptures (the most full and certain witness of God's mind, the *law and testimony* by which our life is to be directed and regulated) were conceived.[x] *He guided the apostles into all truth*, and by them instructed the world in the knowledge of God's gracious intentions toward mankind, and in all the holy mysteries of the Gospel:[y] *That which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit:*[z] *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that Love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*, saith St. Paul.[a] All the knowledge we can pretend to in these things doth proceed merely from his revelation, doth wholly rely upon his authority.

2. To him it especially belongs to execute the will of God, in matters transcending the ordinary power and course of nature. Whence he is called the *power of the Most High* (that is, the substantial power and virtue of God), the *finger of God* (as by comparing the expressions of St. Matthew and St. Luke may appear; and whatever eminent God hath designed, he is said to perform by him. By him he framed the world, and, as Job speaketh, *garnished the heavens.*[b] By him he governeth the world, so that all extraordinary works of providence (when God beside the common law and usual course of nature doth interpose to do any thing), all miraculous performances, are attributed to his energy. By him our Saviour, by him the apostles, by him the prophets, are expressly said to perform their wonderful works; but especially by him,

3. God manages that great work, so earnestly designed by him, of our salvation; working in us all good disposition, capacifying us for salvation, directing and assisting us in all our actions tending thereto.

We naturally are void of those good dispositions in understanding, will, and affection, which are needful to render us acceptable to God, fit to serve and please him, capable of any favour from him, of any true happiness in ourselves: our minds naturally are blind, ignorant, stupid, giddy, and prone to error, especially in things supernatural, spiritual, and ab-

* Deus Pater co-æternum sibi.—Υἱὸς, πηγὴ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος.—Athan. contra Apol. tom. i. p. 601.

† John xv. 26; Eph. i. 17; Rev. xix. 10.—Veritas ubicunque est, a Spiritu Sancto est.—Luke i. 70.

[v] John xx. 22.

[w] 2 Pet. i. 21.

[x] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

[y] John xvi. 13.

[z] Eph. iii. 5.

[a] 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

[b] Luke i. 35; xxiv. 49; xi. 20; Matt. xii. 28; Psal. xxxiii. 6; Gen. i. 1; Job xxvi. 13.

stracted from ordinary sense: our wills are froward and stubborn, light and unstable, inclining to evil, and averse from what is truly good; our affections are very irregular, disorderly, and unsettled: to remove which bad dispositions (inconsistent with God's friendship and favour, driving us into sin and misery), and to beget those contrary to them, the knowledge and belief of divine truth, a love of goodness and delight therein, a well composed, orderly, and steady frame of spirit, God in mercy doth grant to us the virtue of his holy Spirit; who first *opening our hearts*, so as to let in and apprehend the light of divine truth, then by representation of proper arguments persuading our reason to embrace it, begetteth divine knowledge, wisdom, and faith in our minds, which is the work of illumination and instruction, the first part of his office respecting our salvation.[c]

Then by continual impressions he bendeth our inclinations, and mollifieth our hearts, and tempereth our affections to a willing compliance with God's will, and a hearty complacence in that which is good and pleasing to God; so breeding all pious and virtuous inclinations in us, reverence toward God, charity to men, sobriety and purity as to ourselves, with the rest of those amiable and heavenly virtues of soul, which is the work of sanctification, another great part of his office.

Both these operations together (enlightening our minds, sanctifying our will and affections) do constitute and accomplish that work which is styled the regeneration, renovation, vivification, new creation, resurrection of a man; the faculties of our souls being so improved, that we become, as it were, other men thereby; able and apt to do that for which before we were altogether indisposed and unfit.[d]

He also directeth and governeth our actions, continually leading and moving us in the ways of obedience to God's holy will and law. As we live by him (having a new spiritual life implanted in us), so we *walk by him*, are continually led and acted by his conduct and help. He reclaimeth us from error and sin; he supporteth and strengtheneth us in temptation; he adviseth and admonisheth, exciteth and encourageth us to all works of piety and virtue.[e]

Particularly he guideth and quickeneth us in devotion, showing us what we should ask, raising in us holy desires and comfortable hopes, disposing us to approach unto God with fit dispositions of mind, love, and reverence, and humble confidence.[f]

It is also a notable part of the Holy Spirit's office to comfort and sustain us, as in all our religious practice, so particularly in our doubts, difficulties, distresses, and afflictions; to beget joy, peace, and satisfaction in us, in all our performances, and in all our sufferings; whence the title of Comforter belongeth to him.[g]

It is also another part thereof to assure us of God's gracious love and favour, and that we are his children; confirming in us the hopes of our everlasting inheritance.[h] We, feeling ourselves to live spiritually by him, to love God and goodness, to thirst after righteousness, and to delight in pleasing God, are thereby raised to hope God loves and favours us; and that he, having by so authentic a seal ratified his word and promise, having already bestowed so sure a pledge, so precious an earnest, so plentiful firstfruits, will not fail to make good the remainder designed and promised us, of everlasting joy and bliss.

4. The Holy Ghost is also our intercessor with God; presenting our supplications, and procuring our good. He crieth in us, he pleadeth for us to God; whence he is peculiarly called παράκλητος, the Advocate; that is, one who is called in by his good word or countenance to aid him whose cause is to be examined, or petition to be considered.

5. To which things we may add, that the Holy Ghost bears the office of a soul to God's church, informing, enlivening, and actuating the whole body thereof;[i] connecting and containg its members in spiritual union, harmony, order, peace, and safety; especially quicken-

[c] Acts xvi 14; 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

[d] Tit. iii. 5; Col. ii. 12, 13; Eph. ii. 5; iv. 23, 24; ii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 17.

[e] Gal. v. 25; Rom. viii. 14.

[f] Rom. viii. 26, 27; 1 John xv. 14.

[g] Rom. xv. 13; Heb. iii. 6; 1 Pet. i. 8.

[h] Rom. viii. 23; 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 14.

[i] 2 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

ing the principal members (the governors and pastors) thereof; constituting them in their function, qualifying them for the discharge thereof, guiding and aiding them in it: *Take heed* (said St. Paul to the elders of Ephesus) *unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers:* and, *All these things worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he willeth.*[j]

We have thus passed over the several main doctrines concerning the blessed Holy Spirit; the application of which to practice briefly should be this; the uses, which the consideration of these points may have, are these:

1. We are upon the premises obliged to render all honour and adoration to the majesty of the divine Spirit.

2. The consideration of these things should work in us an humble affection and a devout thankfulness to God, for so inestimable a favour conferred upon us, as is the presence and inhabitation, the counsel, conduct, and assistance of God's Holy Spirit in us. Him we gratefully must own and acknowledge as the Author of our spiritual life, of all good dispositions in us, of all good works performed by us, of all happiness that we are capable of; to him, therefore, we must humbly render all thanks and praise, assuming nothing to ourselves.

3. We should earnestly desire and pray for God's Spirit, the fountain of such excellent benefits, such graces, such gifts, such privileges, such joys and blessings inestimable. If we heartily invite him, if we fervently pray for him, he assuredly will come to us; for so our Lord hath promised, *That our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them which ask it.*[k]

4. We should endeavour to demean ourselves well toward the Holy Spirit; yielding to that heavenly guest, when he vouchsafeth to arrive, a ready entrance and a kind welcome into our hearts; entertaining him with all possible respect and observance; hearkening attentively to his holy suggestions, and carefully obeying him; not quenching the divine light, or the devout heat, which he kindleth in us; not resisting his kindly motions and suasions; not grieving or vexing him; that so with satisfaction he may continue and reside in us, to our infinite benefit and comfort. It should engage us to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; that we may be fit temples for so holy and pure a Spirit to dwell in; lest he, by our impurities, be offended, loathe, and forsake us.

5. It is matter of comfort and encouragement, exceedingly needful and useful for us, to consider that we have such a guide and assistant in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. If our lusts be strong, our temptations great, our enemies mighty, we need not be disheartened, having this all-wise and all-mighty friend to advise and help us: his grace is sufficient for us, against all the strength of hell, the flesh, and the world. Let our duty be never so hard, and our natural force never so weak, we shall be able to do all things by him that strengtheneth us; if we will but faithfully apply ourselves to his aid, we cannot fail of good success.

[j] Acts xx. 28; Eph. iv. 12; 1 Cor. xii. 11.

[k] Luke xi. 13.

[THUS far the Author's Sermons upon the *Creed*. As to the remaining Articles, he hath only left a short Explication of them, like to that upon the *Lord's Prayer*, &c. And there needed not much more, considering that the Substance of these Articles had been treated of before: that of the *Holy Catholic Church*, and of the *Communion of Saints*, in his Discourse of the *Unity of the Church*, at the end of his practise of the *Pope's Supremacy*, and that of the *Forgiveness of Sins*, in his Sermons of *Justification*: and that of the *Resurrection of the Body*, in his Sermon of the *Resurrection of Christ*.]

The Holy Catholic Church.

This article was, I conceive, adjoined or inserted here, upon occasion of these many heresies and schism, which from the beginning continually sprang up, to the danger of Christian doctrine, and disturbance of the church; the introducers thereof meaning thereby to secure the truth of religion, the authority of ecclesiastical discipline, the peace and unity of the church, by engaging men to disclaim any consent or conspiracy with any of those erroneous or contentious people (who had devised new conceits, destructive or dangerous to the faith, against the general consent of Christians, or drave on troublesome factions, contrary to the common order, and prejudicial to the peace of the church.) Their meaning of this article therefore was, I take it, this: I believe, that is, I do adhere unto (for belief, as we at first observed, is to be taken as the nature of the matter requireth), or I am persuaded that I ought to adhere unto, that body of Christians which, diffused over the world, retains the faith which was taught, and the discipline which was settled, and the peace which was enjoined by our Lord and his disciples; I acknowledge the doctrines generally embraced by the churches founded and instructed by the apostles; I am ready to observe the received customs and practices by them derived from apostolical institution; I submit to the laws and disciplines by lawful authority established in them; I do persist in charity, concord, and communion with them.

And that men anciently should be obliged to profess thus, there is ground both in reason and scripture. In reason, there being no more proper or effectual argument to assure us that any doctrine is true, or practice warrantable; no means more proper to convince sectaries, deviating from truth or duty, than the consent of all churches, of whom (being so distant in place, language, customs, humour; so independent, or co-ordinate in power) it is not imaginable that they should soon or easily conspire in forsaking the doctrines inculcated by the apostles, or the practices instituted by them: it is the argument which Irenæus, Tertullian, and other defenders of Christian truth and peace, do press; and it may in matters of this kind pass for a demonstration.

It hath also ground in scripture; which as it foretells that pernicious heresies should be introduced; that *many false prophets should arise, and seduce many;* that *grievous wolves should come in, not sparing the flock;* that *men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them;* as they warn us to *take heed of such* men, *to reject* and *refuse heretics, to mark those which make divisions and scandals beside the doctrine which Christians had learnt*, and *to decline from them;* to *stand off from such men* as do ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, that is, *teach things different from apostolical doctrine, the doctrine according to godliness;*[a] as it enjoins us *to hold fast the form of sound words heard from the apostles; to continue in the things which we have learned and been assured of, knowing of whom we learnt them; to obey from the heart that form of doctrine into which we were delivered; to keep the traditions* as the apostles delivered them to us;[b] *to stand fast, and hold the traditions which we were taught, whether by word or writing; to strive earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;* as it enjoins us to *walk orderly*, to *obey our guides*, or *rulers;* to *pursue peace*, to *maintain concord;* to *abide in charity* with all good Christians;[c] as it declareth heresies, factions, contentions, and separations, to be the works of the flesh, proceeding from corrupt dispositions of soul (pride, covetousness, vanity, rashness, instability, perverseness, craft, hypocrisy, want of conscience;) so it also describes the universality of them who stick to the truth, and obsvere the law of Christ, *keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;*[d] to be *one body, knit together, and compacted of parts, affording mutual aid and supply to its nourishment and welfare;* joined to, and deriving life, motion, sense, from *one Head;* informed *by one Spirit;* as *one house, built upon the foundation of*

[a] 1 Tim. vi. 3; 2 Tim. i. 13, 14; iii. 14.
[b] Rom. vi. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6.
[c] Jude 3.
[d] Eph. iv. 3.

prophets and apostles, Christ himself being the corner stone, in whom all the building is fitly framed and connected; as one family under one master; one city under one governor; *one flock under one shepherd;* one nation or people, subject to the same law and government, used to the same speech, custom, and conversation; lastly, as one church or congregation; for, as sometimes every particular assembly of Christians, and sometimes a larger collection of particular societies, combined together in one order, and under one government, are termed churches;* so the whole aggregation of all particular churches, or of all Christian people, is frequently called the church; even as the whole body of those who lived in the profession of obedience to the Jewish law, which was a type of the Christian church, is called קהל ἐκκλησία, *the congregation.*

In relation to which society, these are the duties which we here profess ourselves obliged to, and in effect promise to observe:

1. That we do and will persist in the truth of Christian doctrine, delivered by our Saviour and his apostles, attested unto by the general consent of all Christians; avoiding all novelties of opinion deviating from apostolical doctrine.

2. That we are obliged to maintain a hearty charity and good affection to all good Christians.

3. That we are bound to communicate with all good Christians, and all societies sincerely professing faith, charity, and obedience to our Lord; so as to join with them, as occasion shall be, in all offices of piety; to maintain good correspondence and concord with them.

4. That we should submit to the discipline and order, should preserve the peace, and endeavour the welfare of that part thereof wherein we live: for what of good or harm is done to a member thereof, is also done to the whole.

5. That we should disavow and shun all factious combinations whatever, of persons corrupting the truth of Christian doctrine, or disturbing the peace of the church, or of any part thereof.

6. In fine, that we sincerely should wish in our hearts, earnestly pray for, and by our best endeavours promote the peace and prosperity of the whole catholic church; whereof we profess ourselves members and children; *following,* as St. Paul directs, *righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with those that call upon our Lord with a pure heart.*[e]

* Ubi tres sunt etiam laici, ibi ecclesia est.—*Tertull. Exh. Cast.*

The Communion of Saints.

THESE words were not extant in any of the ancient Creeds, but were afterward inserted: nor, as I conceive, doth the meaning of them much differ from what was intended in the precedent article; and perhaps it was adjoined for interpretation thereof: for the meaning of them is, as I take it, that all the saints (that is, all Christians, either in legal presumption, or according to real disposition of heart, such) do, in effect, or should, according to obligation, communicate, partake, join together, consent, and agree in what concerneth saints, or members of the holy catholic church; in believing and acknowledging the same heavenly truth; in performance of devotions or offices of piety with and for one another; in charitable good-will and affection toward one another; in affording mutual advices, assistances, and supplies toward the good (either spiritual or temporal) of each other; in condolency and compassion of each other's evils, in congratulation and complacency in each other's good; in minding the same thing for one another, and bearing one another's burdens; so that if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. This briefly seems to be the meaning of this point; and I need not to insist on clearing the truth, or showing the uses thereof; the doctrine so manifestly carrying its obligation and its use in the face thereof.

The Forgiveness of Sins.

THAT men are naturally apt to transgress the laws of God, and the dictates of rea-

* 2 Tim. ii. 22.

son; that so doing they incur guilt, and are exposed to vengeance (from the great Patron of right and goodness, who is injured and dishonoured thereby);* that hence they are subject to restless fears and stinging remorses of conscience; that they cannot be exempted from such obnoxiousness otherwise than by the free grace and mercy of God, nor be freed from such anxieties otherwise than by an assurance of pardon from him; are points to natural light sufficiently manifest.

Of such a disposition or will in God to remit offences, that all men have ever had a presumption, their application to him in religious practice doth show (for no man would address himself in service to God, without a hope that God is reconcilable to him, and that his service therefore may be acceptable;[a]) particularly that general practice of offering sacrifice for expiation of sin, and appeasing God's wrath, doth plainly declare the same.

But this was indeed but a presumption or conjecture, partly drawn from the necessity of their case (which admitted no other remedy beside that hope), and from man's nature, apt to presume that which most pleaseth; partly grounded upon experience of God's forbearance to punish, and the continuance of his bounty toward men; upon which grounds no man could build a full confidence that he should find mercy, much less could he be satisfied upon what terms it would be granted, in what manner it should be dispensed, or how far it should extend; these things merely depending on the will of God, and the knowledge of them only upon revelation from him.

The Jewish dispensation (which was particular and preparatory to Christianity) did indeed appoint and accept expiations for some lesser faults, committed out of ignorance and infirmity; but it pretended not *to justify* from all things, nor upon any terms did it promise remission of great sins wilfully committed, but threatened remediless excision for them, pronouncing dreadful imprecations, not only upon the transgressors of some particular laws, but against all those who continued *not in all things written in the law to do them:*[a] so that the remission tendered by Moses was of a narrow extent, and could hardly exempt any man from obligation to punishment, and from fear thereof; although indeed (to prevent despair, and that which naturally follows thereon, a total neglect of duty) God was pleased by his prophets, among that people, occasionally to signify somewhat of further grace (beyond what he was tied to by the terms of the covenant with that people) reserved for them, and that he was willing (upon condition of hearty repentance and real amendment) to receive to mercy even those who had been guilty of the most heinous offences: but these discoveries, as they were special and extraordinary, so were they preparatory to the gospel, and dispensed upon grounds only declared therein.

It is the gospel only which explicitly teacheth and tendereth remission of all sins; showing for what reasons, upon what conditions, to what purposes, it is dispensed by God. It clearly and fully declares how God, in free mercy and pity toward us (being all involved in sin and guilt, and lying under a condemnation to death and misery; all our works being unworthy of acceptance, all our sacrifices being unable in the least part to satisfy for our offences), was pleased himself to provide an obedience worthy of his acceptance, and thoroughly pleasing to him (in effect imputable to us, as performed by one of our kind and race, and for our sake willingly undertaken, according to his gracious pleasure), to provide a sacrifice in nature so pure, in value so precious, as might be perfectly satisfactory for our offences; in regard to which obedience God is become reconciled, so as to open his arms of grace to mankind; in respect to which sacrifice he doth offer remission of sins to all men who shall upon the terms propounded be willing to embrace it; namely, upon condition of faith and repentance; that is, upon sincerely professing the doctrine of Christ, and heartily resolving to obey his laws. This is that great doctrine so peculiar to the gospel, from whence especially it hath its name, and is styled

* Luke xxiv. 47,—And that repentance and remission of sins, &c.

[a] Heb. xi. 6.

[b] Numb. xv. 30; Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10.

the word of grace: this is that great blessing, which Zachariah, in his prophetical hymn, did praise God for: *The giving knowledge of salvation to God's people in the remission of their sins, according to the tender mercies of our God; in which the dayspring from on high hath visited us:*[c] this is the *good tidings of great joy to all people*, which the angels did celebrate at our Saviour's birth:[d] this is that main point which our Lord especially charged his apostles to declare and testify, *that in his name repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations;*[e] that *God hath exalted him to his right hand, as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins;*[f] (*to give repentance;* that is, to give, as Clemens in his Epistle well expoundeth it, μετανοίας τόπον, a place for repentance, in order to mercy; or that it should be acceptable and available for the remission of our sins, as all that on our part is required toward it;) all which points (together with the nature of this remission, its causes, its grounds, its ends, its conditions, its means, and way of conveyance) are admirably couched in those words of St. Paul: *All men* (saith he) *have sinned, and are come short of the glory of God: but we are justified freely by his grace, by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath proposed a propitiatory by faith in his blood, for the demonstration of his righteousness, toward the forgiveness of forepast offences.*[g]

The consideration of which point is of exceedingly great use and influence.

1. It should engage us to admire the great goodness of God, and with grateful hearts to praise him for so great a favour: that God, being so grievously affronted and wronged by our sins (loaded with extreme aggravations), should be at such charge to purchase for us the means of pardon, should offer it so freely, should so earnestly invite and entreat us to accept it; how inexpressible a clemency doth it demonstrate! how great thankfulness doth it require from us!

2. It should beget in us an ardent love to God, answerable to that love which disposed him to bestow on us so inestimable a benefit. We should imitate the debtor in the gospel, *who most loved him who had forgiven him most;* and the good penitent, St. Magdalen, who, *because much was forgiven her, did love much.*[h]

3. It is matter and ground of hope and of comfort to us (is preventive of despair and immoderate sadness;) for that our case cannot be so bad, but there is an assured remedy at hand, if we please to have recourse thereto, the mercy of God upon our true repentance; whereby we infallibly shall obtain that happy state, of which it is said, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity.*[i]

4. It is a great engagement to obedience; for that it greatly aggravates our disobedience, and endangers our estate. Having once from God's mercy obtained a cure and state of health, we by relapsing into sin do incur deeper guilt, and expose ourselves to greater hazard: *Behold* (saith our Lord in like case) *thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee.*[j]

5. Lastly, it shows us how much (in conformity to God, and compliance with his will) we should bear with and forgive the offences or injuries done to us. You know how strongly our Lord, in the gospel, presseth the consideration of God's free pardon bestowed on us to this purpose; how he sets out the extreme unreasonableness and disingenuity of those who, notwithstanding this dealing of God with them, are hard-hearted and unmerciful toward their fellow-servants; how he threatens implacable severity toward them who *do not from their hearts forgive* to their brethren their trespasses;[k] and promiseth remission of sins to them who (according to what they profess to do in their prayers) shall forgive to men the offences committed against them; making it not only an indispensable condition, but a sufficient means of obtaining the divine favour and mercy.

I shall only further take notice, that

[c] Luke i. 78, 77.
[d] Luke ii. 10.
[e] Luke xxiv. 47.
[f] Acts v. 31.
[g] Rom. iii. 4, &c.
[h] Luke vii. 41, 47.
[i] Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.
[j] John v. 14.
[k] Matt. xviii. 35, &c.; vi. 14.

although it be true that God in the gospel doth generally propound remission of sins (upon account of our Lord's performances, and in his name) to all that truly repent and turn unto him, chiefly granting it on this consideration, and not withholding it from any, upon a blameless default of other performances;[1] yet he requires (and complying with his will therein is part of the duty which repentance disposes to and is declared by) that (as well for public edification and the honour of his church, as for the comfort and advantage of persons concerned therein) this repentance should be solemnly declared and approved by the church; that this remission should be formally dispensed by the hands of God's ministers, being declared by express words, or ratified by certain seals, or signified by mysterious representations appointed by God. And to remission of sins, as thus dispensed, I doubt not but this article hath an especial reference; it being, in St. Cyprian's form of profession at baptism, expressed by *Credo remissionem pecatorum in ecclesia:* but because the church's remitting of sins thus is by virtue of that authority which Christ imparted to his church, called *the power of the keys*, I shall, upon this occasion, here briefly explain the nature of that power.

THE POWER OF THE KEYS.

THIS power in part is founded upon (and this name of it was wholly drawn from) those words of our Lord to St. Peter, *And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*[a] Where that which our Lord doth promise to St. Peter (not to him personally, but, as the Fathers interpret it, representatively; he then signifying the church, and standing in the place of its governors; however, not exclusively for it) is by a parity of reason to be extended to all the apostles, and after them to all the governors of the church; unto whom the same power is otherwhere in terms equivalent committed, and by whom it was exercised, as may appear from comparing the practice of the apostles, and of the church in continual succession from them, with the nature or intent of this power; the which it is now our business very briefly to explain.

It is expressed in a metaphorical term; and it is therefore to be understood according to the analogy it beareth with the thing assumed to resemble it, as the nature of the object thereof doth require or admit. Wherefore it being the main property of a key, by opening, to give ingress and egress (admittance into a place, or emission from it;) or by shutting, to exclude from entrance, or to detain within; this power may be supposed to imply a right or ability to perform such actions in reference to its object, which is the kingdom of heaven.

By *the kingdom of heaven* is understood the state of religion under the gospel, in distinction, as it seems, from the constitution and condition thereof under the Mosaical law. In the times of the law, God's law was in a manner terrestrial, he being King of the Jewish nation particularly, Jerusalem being his royal seat, and the temple his throne; where he was served with external and visible performances; where he expressly promised earthly benefits and privileges (long life and prosperity in the land of Canaan), and threatened punishments answerable: but in the gospel, God is worshipped universally, as resident in heaven, as requiring spiritual services addressed to heaven, as conferring rewards and inflicting penalties relating to the future state there. This state, therefore, aptly is called *the kingdom of heaven*, of which all Christians are subjects; the body of whom consequently may also be named *the kingdom of heaven* (for the word *kingdom* sometimes denoteth the constitution of things in or under which a certain people do live, sometimes the people themselves.)

Now whereas this state hath two degrees, or the persons under it two conditions; one here present upon earth, in transition and acquisition; the other hereafter, of residence and fruition in heaven (one like that of the Israelites travelling in the wilderness, the other like their possession of Canaan;) in this case we may well understand both, but chiefly the first (the kingdom of grace here), where in immediately this power is exerted

[1] Acts xxvi. 20; iii. 19.
[a] Matt. xvi. 19.

although its effects do finally refer and reach to the other (the kingdom of glory hereafter.)

Let us then consider how this kingdom may be opened or shut by the governors of the church. This evidently may be performed several ways.

1. The kingdom of heaven may be opened by yielding real helps, inducing to enter into the church; it may be shut by the same means, inducing persons to continue within it. So by instruction, advice, persuasion, admonition, reproof; by affording fit means and occasions, by prescribing laws and rules conducing to those purposes, the governors are obliged to open and shut the kingdom of heaven: and the doing so therefore may be conceived an ingredient of this power.

2. The kingdom of heaven may be opened by intercession, or imprecation from God of fit dispositions qualifying persons to enter, together with a mind willing to do so. Thus, as all Christians in their way may open the kingdom, so particularly the governors, by their office and function, are obliged to do it, as the public mouths of the church. Wherefore St. Paul enjoins that *supplication be made for all men; because God would have all men to be saved, and to* have them *come to the knowledge of truth;* or would have all men brought into this kingdom.[b]

3. The kingdom of heaven may be opened or shut by prudent discrimination of persons who are fit to be received into the church (εὔθετοι εἰς βασιλείαν, well-disposed for the kingdom, as St. Luke speaks), or who deserve to be rejected from it.

Thus the governors of the church do open and shut the kingdom, when they determine who shall be admitted to baptism (which is *ecclesiæ janua*, and *porta gratiæ*, as St. Austin calls it), and who shall be refused; they admitted, who appear competently instructed in Christian doctrine, and well resolved to obey it; they refused, who seem in those points ignorant or ill-resolved.

4. The kingdom of heaven may be opened or shut by judicial acts whereby unworthy persons (whose conversation may be infectious, or whose continuance in the church may be infamous thereto) are excluded from it, or kept without; or whereby persons, upon sufficient presumption of repentance and amendment, are restored to communion.

Thus considering the sense of the words with the nature of the matter, the power of the keys may be understood.

The same may be further cleared by considering and explicating the phrases equivalent, by which it is expressed or interpreted. Such are especially *binding* and *loosing*, *remitting* and *retaining sins*.

By *binding* and *loosing*, our Lord himself interpreteth this power: *I will* (saith he) *give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.* For understanding the sense of which phrases, we may consider that things or persons may be several ways bound and loosed.

1. *Binding* may denote any sort of determination, restriction, or detention, imposed on persons and things; and *loosing* answerably may signify the contrary effects: so by just authority to command or prohibit a thing (whereby its moral quality is determined, it is made good or bad), is to bind that thing, and the persons subject to that authority. Also to abrogate a law, or to dispense with its observation, is to loose the matter of that law, together with the persons concerned in it. Thus it is said that the Scribes, by prescribing many unprofitable observances, did bind heavy burdens on the people.[c] Again likewise,

2. To interpret the sense of a law or doctrine is a kind of ligation or solution. It binds, by declaring what is commanded or prohibited, and consequently to what men are obliged; it looses, by showing what is permitted or remains indifferent, so leaving men to their freedom. *Quam vero clavem habebant legis doctores, nisi interpretationem legis?* saith Tertullian.[d] To bind and loose thus, doth plainly belong to the pastors of the church, they by office being the interpreters and teachers of God's law.

3. The exercise of any jurisdiction doth *astringe* the offender to punishment or

[b] 1 Tim. ii. 1, &c.

[c] Matt. xxiii. 4.

[d] In Marc. lib. —. cap. 27.

satifaction, or doth absolve him from them; it consequently may be called *ligation* or *solution* respectively.

4. The bringing persons under any contract is a tying them to performance thereof. Thus do the pastors of the church bind those whom they receive into the church at baptism, upon undertaking the conditions of Christianity; and those whom after exclusion from Christian communion they absolve, upon engagement to lead a better life.

5. The detention of a person in any state, or under any power, is called *ligation;* and a deliverance out of such a state or power, *solution.* So he that (by withholding means or assurance of pardon) is detained under the guilt of sin, is thereby bound; but he that hath the means and overtures of pardon conferred on him, is loosed; and thus do the pastors of the church bind and loose, by retaining and remitting sin; the doing which is an instance of this power, expressly granted by our Lord: *Whose soever sins* (saith he) *ye remit, they are remitted to them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*[e]

Now they may be understood to remit or retain sins divers ways.

1. They do remit sins *dispositivè*, by working in persons fit dispositions, upon which remission of sins, by God's promise, is consequent; the dispositions of faith and repentance.

2. They remit (or retain sins) *declarativè*, as the ambassadors of God, in his name pronouncing the word of reconciliation to the penitent, and denouncing wrath to the obstinate in sin.

2. They remit sins *impetrativè*, obtaining pardon for sinners by their prayers, according to that of St. James: *Is any man sick among you? let him call the elders of the church; and let them pray over him:* and, *The prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*[f]

4. They remit sins *dispensativè*, by consigning pardon in administration of the sacraments, especially in conferring baptism, whereby, duly administered and undertaken, all sins are washed away; and in the absolving of penitents, wherein grace is exhibited and ratified by imposition of hands, the which St. Paul calls χαρίζεσθαι, to bestow grace or favour upon the penitent.

By considering all these things we may competently understand wherein this power of the keys doth consist. We might further illustrate it by observing the exercise thereof by the apostles, and in the primitive church; by viewing the practice of a like power under the law, which might perhaps be the rise and pattern hereof; by considering the necessity and usefulness of such a power; but I cannot insist on those particulars, but proceed to the next article.

[e] John xx. 23. [f] James v. 14, 15.

The Resurrection of the Body, or Flesh.

THE doctrine of the immortality of the soul (whereby men are capable of rewards or punishments, according to their doings in this life) hath, in all religions, been deemed a necessary principle, and for such (as Cicero and Seneca expressly tell us) hath been embraced by all nations; having indeed, probably from original tradition, been conveyed over all the world. The same also divers philosophers (Socrates especially, and his followers) did by natural reason strive to evince true. But tradition being too slippery, and reason too feeble thoroughly to persuade it. Christianity, by a clear and full proof (of miraculous works and sensible experiments), doth assure us of it; the certainty thereof we owe to his instruction, *who brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.*[a] It plainly shows, that when we die, we do not (like brute beasts, or other natural bodies, when they appear dissolved) wholly perish; that our souls do not vanish into nothing, nor are resolved into invisible principles; but do return into God's hand, or into the place by him appointed for them, there continuing in that life which is proper to a soul. Neither only thus much doth it teach us concerning our state after this life, but it further informs us, that our bodies themselves shall be raised again out of their dust and corruption, that our souls shall be reunited

[a] 2 Tim. i. 10.

to them, and that our persons shall be restored into their perfect integrity of nature; the bringing of which effects to pass, by divine power, is commonly called, *the resurrection of the dead*, or *from the dead* (ἐκ νεκρῶν), and simply *the resurrection;* as also, *being raised*, *being reduced from the dead:* sometimes also it is called, *the regeneration* (or iterated nativity), and *being born from the dead;* which terms imply a respect to the body, and to the person of a man, as constituted of body and soul: for the mere permanency of our souls in being and life could not (with any propriety or truth) be called a resurrection: that which never had fallen could not be said to be raised again; that which did never die could not be restored from death; nor could men be said to rise again, but in respect to that part which had fallen, or that state which had ceased to be. And as to be born at first doth signify the production and union of the parts essential to a man; so to be born again implies the restitution and reunion of the same; a man thereby becoming entirely the same person that he was before. The same is also signified in terms more formal and directly expressive: *the quickening of the dead;* the *vivification of our mortal bodies;* the *redemption of our body;* the *corruptible* (τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο, this very same corruptible body) *putting on incorruption, and this mortal putting on immortality; those who are in the graves hearing Christ's voice*, and *proceeding forth to resurrection*, either of *life* or *judgment;* the *awaking of them which sleep in the dust of the earth;* the sea, the death, the hell (or universal grave), resigning their dead; which expressions and the like occurring, do clearly and fully prove the reparation of our bodies, and their reunion to our souls, and our persons becoming in substance completely the same that we were. Which truth, of all perhaps that Christianity revealed, as most new and strange, was the hardliest received, and found most opposition among heathens, especially philosophers: *Hearing the resurrection of the dead, some of them mocked; others said, We will hear thee again of this matter;*[b] so was St. Paul's discourse about this point entertained at Athens; they neglected or derided it, as a thing altogether impossible, or very improbable to happen (as Pliny somewhere counts the revocation of the dead to life impossible to be performed, otherwhere calls it, *puerile deliramentum, a childish dotage*, to suppose it.[c]) But why it should be deemed either impossible to divine power, or improbable upon accounts of reason, no good argument can be assigned. To re-collect the dispersed parts of a man's body, to range and *dispose* them into their due situation and order; to reduce them into a temper fit to discharge vital functions; to rejoin the soul to a body so restored; why should it be impossible or seem difficult to him, who did first frame and temper our body out of the dust, and inspired the soul into it; to him, who out of mere confusion digested the whole world into so wonderful an order and harmony; to him, who into a dead lump of earth inserted such numberless varieties of life; who from seeds buried in the ground and corrupted there, doth cause so goodly plants to spring forth; who hath made all nature to subsist by continual vicissitudes of life and death; every morning, in a manner, and every spring representing a general resurrection? (Well might the prophet Jeremiah say, *Ah Lord God! thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:*[d] there is indeed nothing too hard for omniscient wisdom to contrive, for omnipotent strength to execute.) And what difficulties soever fancy may suggest, can we doubt of that being possible, which experience attesteth done? Ezekiel saw *dry bones* rejointed, and reinspired with life;[e] divers instances of dead persons restored to life are recorded in the prophetical writings; and more in the New Testament; but most remarkable is that passage at our Saviour's death, when it is said, that *many tombs were opened, and many bodies of saints that had departed rose, and coming out of the tombs, after our Saviour's resurrection, entered into the holy city, and did appear to many*[f] (or publicly to the many, τοῖς πολλοῖς,) which was a most full and manifest ex-

[b] Acts xvii. 32.

[c] Plin. Hist. ii. 7; vii. 55.

[d] Jer. xxxii. 17.

[e] Ezek. xxxvii.

[f] Matt. xxvii. 56.

periment of a miraculous resurrection, like to that which we believe: but of all, our Lord's own resurrection doth irrefragably confirm the possibility of our resurrection; so that St. Paul, with highest reason, might thus expostulate with the incredulous upon this account: *And if Christ be preached* (or assured by testimony) *that he rose from the dead, how say some that there is no resurrection of the dead?*[c] that is, how can any man deny that to be possible, which is so palpably exemplified?

Neither can the point be showed improbable or implausible; but it is rather very consonant to the reason of the thing; and good causes may be assigned why it should be. Man, according to original design and frame, doth consist of soul and body; these parts have a natural relation, an aptitude, and an appetite (as it seems) to cohabit and co-operate with each other; many actions very proper to man's nature cannot be performed without their conjunction and concurrence; many capacities of joy and comfort (with their opposites) do result thence: the separation of them we see how unwilling, violent, and repugnant, it is to nature; and we are taught that it is penal, and consequent upon sin, and therefore cannot be good and perfect: wherefore it is no wonder that God designing to restore man to his ancient integrity, yea, to a higher perfection, rewarding him with all the felicity his nature is capable of (on the one hand I mean, as on the other hand justly to punish and afflict him according to his demerit), should raise the body, and rejoin it to the soul, that it might contribute its natural subserviency to such enjoyments and sufferings respectively. Not to omit the congruity in justice, that the bodies themselves, which did communicate in works of obedience and holiness, or of disloyalty and profaneness (which, in St. Paul's language, were either servants of righteousness unto sanctity, or slaves to impurity and iniquity), should also partake in suitable recompenses; that the body which endured grievous hardships for righteousness, should enjoy comfortable refreshments; or that those which did wallow in unlawful pleasures, should undergo just afflictions.

[c] 1 Cor. xv. 12.

Many other things might be said to this purpose; but I pass to the next point, annexed to this, as in nature, so in order here.

The Life Everlasting.

THE immediate consequent of the resurrection (common, as St. Paul expresseth, to just and unjust), is, as we have it placed in the catalogue of fundamentals, set down by the apostle to the Hebrews, κρίμα αἰώνιον, that judgment or doom, by which the eternal state of every person is determined; and accordingly every man must (as St. Paul says) *bear the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*[a] Now this state generally taken (as respecting both the righteous and blessed, the wicked and cursed persons), for that it doth suppose a perpetual duration in being and sense, may be called *everlasting life;* although life (as being commonly apprehended the principal good, and because all men naturally have a most strong desire to preserve it; with reference also, probably, to the law, wherein continuance of life is proposed as the main reward of obedience), is used to denote peculiarly the blessed state; and death (the most abominable and terrible thing to nature; the most extreme also of legal punishments threatened upon the transgressors of the law) is also used to signify the condition of the damned; the resurrection of life, and resurrection of damnation; everlasting life and everlasting punishment being opposed; although, I say, life be thus commonly taken (as also the resurrection itself, by an εὐφημισμὸς, is sometimes appropriated to the righteous), yet the reason of the case requires that here we understand it generally, so as to comprehend both states;[b] both being matters of faith equally necessary, and of like fundamental consequence; both yielding the highest encouragements to good practice, and determents from bad: for, as on the one hand, what can more strongly excite us to the performance of our duty, than an assurance of obtaining hereby so happy a state? what can more efficaciously

[a] Acts xxiv. 15; Heb. vi. 2; 2 Cor v. 10.
[b] John v. 29; Matt. xxv. 46; Dan. xii. 2; Phil. iii. 11; Luke xx. 35.

withdraw us from impiety, than being certain thereby to lose and fall short of it? so on the other hand, what can more vehemently provoke us to obedience, than being persuaded that we shall thereby avoid eternal misery? what can more powerfully deter us from sin, than considering, that by commission of it we shall expose ourselves to that wretched state? Infinitely stupid and obdurate we must be, if the consideration what these states are doth not produce these effects.

What is the state of life? it is a state of highest dignity and glory; of sweetest comfort and joy; of joy full in measure, pure in quality, perpetual in duration, in all respects perfect in the utmost capacity of our nature; wherein all our parts and faculties shall be raised to the highest pitch of perfection, our bodies shall become free from all corruptibility and decay, all weakness and disease, all grossness and unwieldiness, all deformity and defilement: for they shall, as St. Paul teaches us, be rendered incorruptible, strong, healthful, glorious, and spiritual: our souls also shall in their faculties be advanced, in their inclinations rectified, in their appetites satisfied; the understanding becoming full of light, clear and distinct in knowledge of truth, free from ignorance, doubt, and error; the will being steadily inclined to good, ready to comply with God's will, free from all weakness and all perverseness; our affections being set in right order and frame, with a constant regularity tending unto that which is really best, and taking a full delight therein: wherein we shall enjoy the blissful sight of God, smiling in love and favour upon us; the presence of our gracious Redeemer, embracing us with most tender affection; the society of the holy angels, and of the just made perfect; whose company and conversation, how unconceivably sweet and delightful must it be! wherein nothing adverse or troublesome can befall us; no unpleasant or offensive object shall present itself to us; no want, or need of anything shall appear; no care, or fear, or suspicion; no labour or toil, no sorrow or pain, no distaste or regret, no stir or contention, no listlessness or satiety, shall be felt, or shall come near us; where God (as it is in the Apocalypse) will wipe every tear from the eyes (of them who shall come there), and death shall be no more;[c] nor sorrow, nor clamour, nor pain any more: it is, in fine, a state in excellency surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it: of which the brightest splendours and the choicest pleasures here are but obscure shadows and faint resemblances; comparable to which no eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard any thing; nor hath it ascended into any heart of man to conceive the like;[d] as St. Paul, out of the prophet Isaiah, telleth us: which state, seeing by a pious life we certainly do acquire a right unto, and shall enjoy a possession of; but from an impious life do forfeit all pretence thereto, and shall infallibly be deprived of it; are we not infinitely mad, are we not extremely enemies, and injurious to ourselves, if we do not embrace the one, and eschew the other?

Again: What is the other state, that of death? what but a state of lowest disgrace and ignominy; of utter shame and confusion; of intolerable pains and miseries, without any ease or respite, without any hope or remedy, without any cessation or end; wherein we shall not only for ever be secluded from God's presence and favour; not only be deprived of all rest, comfort, and joy, but detruded into utmost wretchedness; into a condition far more dark and dismal, more forlorn and disconsolate, than we can imagine; which not the sharpest pain of body, nor the bitterest anxiety of mind, which any of us have ever felt, can in any measure represent; wherein our bodies shall be afflicted continually by a sulphurous flame, not only scorching the skin, but piercing the inmost sinews; our souls shall incessantly be gnawed upon by a worm (the worm of bitter remorse for our wretched perverseness and folly; the worm of horrid despair ever to get out of that sad estate;) under which unexpressible vexations, always enduring pangs of death, always in sense and in desire of dying; we shall never be able to die: which miserable state, since it is by performing our duty surely avoided, since by neglecting or transgressing God's laws it is inevitably incurrred; if we do not accordingly choose to demean ourselves, how infinitely careless are we of

[c] Rev. xxi. 4. [d] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

our own good, how desperately bent to our own ruin!

If these considerations make no impression on us, what can any reason effect? what can any words signify? how monstrously sottish or wild do we appear to be! I conclude with prayer to Almighty God, that according to his infinite mercy, he, by his gracious assistance leading us in the ways of piety and righteousness, would bring us to everlasting life and happiness; that he by the same powerful grace withdrawing us from impiety and iniquity, would rescue us from eternal death and misery: *To him, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be for ever all glory and praise.* Amen.

A

BRIEF EXPOSITION

OF

THE CREED, THE LORD'S PRAYER,* AND THE DECALOGUE,

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

AN

EXPOSITION ON THE CREED.

THE order prescribed to this exercise directs us to treat upon, first, The Creed; secondly, The Lord's Prayer; thirdly, The Decalogue; fourthly, The Sacraments; fifthly, The Power of the Keys.

The first comprehends the main principles of our religion (I mean the Christian, as distinguished from all other religions), with especial respect to which our practice is also to be regulated. The second directs us in the principal duty of our religion (and which procures grace and ability to perform the rest), our devotion toward God, informing us concerning both the matter and manner thereof. The third is a compendious body, as it were, of law, according to which we are bound to order our practice and conversation, both toward God and man; containing the chief of those perpetual and immutable laws of God, to which our obedience is indispensably due: and unto which all other rules of moral duty are well reducible. The next place is fitly allotted to those positive ordinances, or mystical rites, instituted by God for the ornament and advantage of our religion; the which we are obliged with devotion and edification of ourselves to observe, and therefore should understand the signification and use of them. Lastly, because God hath ordered Christians (for mutual assistance and edification) to live in society together, and accordingly hath appointed differences of office and degree among them, assigning to each suitable privileges and duties, it is requisite we consider this point, also that we may know how to behave ourselves towards each other, as duty requires, respectively according to our stations in the church, or as members of that Christian society. Such, in brief, may be the reason of the method prescribed to these discourses, the which, God willing, we purpose to follow.

1. *Concerning the Creed.*

That in the primitive churches, those who being of age (after previous instruction, and some trial of their conversation) were received into entire communion of the church, and admitted to baptism, were required to make open profession of their being persuaded of the truth of Christianity, and their being resoled to live according thereto; and that this profession was made by way of answer to certain interrogatories propounded to them, is evident by frequent and obvious testimonies of the most ancient ecclesiastical writers; and St. Peter himself seems to allude to this custom, when he saith that baptism saves us (conduces to our salvation), as being ἐπερώτημα ἀγαθῆς συνει-

* Orat. Domin.. — *Si per omnia precationum sanctarum verba discurras, quantum existimo nihil invenies, quod non ista Dominica contineat et concludat oratio: unde liberum est aliis atque aliis verbis, eadem tamen in orando dicere, sed non debet esse liberum alia dicere.*—Aug. ad Probam Epist. cxxi.

δήσεως, *the stipulation*, freely and sincerely, *bona fide*, or with a good conscience, made by us, then when we solemnly did yield our consent and promise to what the church, in God's behalf, did demand of us to believe and undertake.[a] I conceive also, that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews doth allude to the same practice when (chap. x. 22, 23) he thus exhorts to perseverance: *Having had our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water* (that is, having received baptism;) *let us hold fast the profession of our faith* (that which we at our baptism did make) *without wavering* (or declining from it;) *for he that did promise is faithful:* God will be true to his part, and perform what he then promised of mercy and grace to us. (Some resemblance of which practice we have in that passage between Philip the deacon and the Ethiopian eunuch: where, after Philip had instructed the eunuch, the eunuch first speaks: *Behold water; what hinders me from being baptized?* Philip answers, *If thou believest with all thy heart, it is lawful:* the eunuch replies, *I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God:*[b] upon which short confession of his faith he is baptized.) Now that this profession (take it either for the action, or the entire *res gesta;* or for the form, or for the matter thereof; to all which indifferently, by metonymical schemes of speech, the same words are usually in such cases applied), that this profession, I say, was very anciently (in the Roman especially, and some other churches) called *symbolum*, appears by those remarkable words of Cyprian (the most ancient perhaps wherein this word is found applied to this matter) in his seventy-sixth Epistle *ad magnum*, arguing against the validity of baptism administered by heretics and schismatics (such as were the Novatians;) *Quod si aliquis illud opponit, ut dicat eandem Novatianum legem tenere, quam catholica ecclesia teneat, eodem symbolo quo et nos baptizare, eundem nosse Deum patrem, eundem filium Christum, eundem Spiritum Sanctum, ac propter hoc usurpare eam potestatem baptizandi posse, quod videatur in interrogatione baptismi a nobis non discrepare, sciat quisquis hoc opponendum putat, primum non esse unam nobis et schismaticis symboli legem, neque eandem interrogationem.* Where those expressions, *Eodem symbolo baptizare*, and *In interrogatione baptismi non discrepare;* as also, *Una symboli lex*, and *Eadem interrogatio*, do seem to mean the same thing: and in other later writers the same manner of speaking doth sometimes occur; as when Hilary thus prays: *Conserva hanc conscientiæ meæ vocem, ut quod in regenerationis meæ symbolo baptizatus in Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu S. professus sum, semper obtineam:*[c] where *regenerationis suæ symbolum* doth seem to import that contestation of his faith which he solemnly made at his baptism. Now the reason why this profession was so called may seem to be, for that it was a solemn signification of his embracing the doctrine and law of Christ; even as Aristotle calls words, σύμβολα τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων, the symbols or representations of the conceptions that are in the mind: this seems to be the most simple reason of this term being so used; but if the simplicity of this notion doth not satisfy, there is another very agreeable to the nature of the thing, not wanting the countenance of some good authority. The word συμβάλλω doth in the best Greek writers not uncommonly signify, to transact commerce, to make contract, to agree about any bargain or business;[d] and the word συμβόλαιον (thence derived) doth, according to most common use, denote any contract or covenant made between two parties; now, that the stipulation made between a person by baptism initiated and received into Christianity, and God Almighty (or the church in his behalf), may most appositely be called a covenant, or contract, none, I suppose, will doubt; wherein we confess faith, and promise obedience; God vouchsafes present mercy, promises grace and future reward: and that the word σύμβολον should hence import thus much, we cannot much wonder, if we have observed how commonly words are wont to borrow signification from their kindred and neighbours: and thus Chrysologus plainly interprets the meaning of the word: *Placitum, vel pactum* (saith he),

[a] 1 Pet. iii. 21.
[b] Acts viii. 36.
[c] 12 de Trin.
[d] Plato, Demosthenes, &c.

quod lucri spes venientis continet vel futuri, symbolum nuncupari etiam contractu docemur humano; quod tamen symbolum inter duos firmat semper geminata conscriptio—inter Deum vero et homines symbolum fidei sola fide firmatur;[e] and commonly (in his sermons upon this Creed) he styles it *pactum fidei.* Ruffinus indeed tells us (and divers after him) that the reason why this Creed was called *symbolum*, or *indicium*, is, because it was devised as a mark to distinguish the genuine teachers of the Christian doctrine from such false teachers as did adulterate or corrupt it; or because it was a kind of military token [cognizance] (a badge, as it were, or a watch-word), by which the true friends of Christianity might be discriminated and discerned from the enemies thereof: *Symbolum tessera est et signaculum, quo inter fideles perfidosque secernitur.*[f] But if we consider the brevity and simplicity of the ancient forms, unsuitable to such a design, it may seem more probable that it was intended, not so much to separate Christians from each other, as to distinguish them from all of other religions; or more simply, as we said, to be a mark whereby the person converted to Christianity did signify that he did sincerely embrace it, consenting to the capital doctrines thereof, and engaging obedience to its laws. Indeed afterward (when it was commonly observed that almost any kind of heretics, without evident repugnance to their particular opinions, could conform to those short and general forms, to exclude, or prevent compliance with them) occasion was taken to enlarge the ancient forms, or to frame new ones (more full and explicit), to be used, as formerly, at baptism. But (to leave further consideration of the name, and to pursue what more concerns the thing) for the more ancient forms, wherein the forementioned profession was conceived, it seems that in several places and times they did somewhat vary, receiving alteration and increase, according to the discretion of those who did preside in each church;* the principal, however, and more substantial parts (which had especial direction and authority from the words and practice of our Saviour and his apostles) being every where and at all times retained (those, namely, which concerned the Persons of the holy Trinity, and the great promises of the gospel; remission of sins, to be ministered here by the church; and eternal life, to be conferred hereafter by God upon those who had constantly believed and obeyed the gospel.) That in the more ancient times there was no one form, generally fixed and agreed upon (to omit other arguments that persuade it), is hence probable, for that the most learned and generally knowing persons of those times, when in their apologies against disbelievers for Christianity, or in their assertions of its genuine principles and doctrines against misbelievers, they by the nature and sequel of their discourse are engaged to sum up the principal doctrines of our religion, they do not yet (as reason did require, and they could hardly have avoided doing, had there been any such constantly and universally settled or avowed form) allege any such; but rather from their own observation of the common sense agreed upon, and in their own expression, set down those main doctrines wherein the chief churches did consent; as may be seen by divers of them, especially by Tertullian (the oldest of the Latins), if we compare several places, wherein he delivers the rule of faith (as he constantly calls it, that is, such a summary of Christian principles, by which the truth of doctrines concerning matters therein touched might be examined;[g]) wherein, I say, he delivers such rules of faith, to the same purpose in sense, but in language somewhat different, yet never referring us to any standing and more authentic form. Among these forms, that which now passes under the title of the Apostles' Creed (about which we discourse) seems to have been peculiar to the Roman church, and that very anciently (as to the chief articles thereof; for it appears that in process of time it hath been somewhat altered, especially by addition;) and because it had been used from such antiquity, that its original com-

* His additur *indivisibilem* et *impassibilem*: sciendum quod duo illi sermones in ecclesiæ Romanæ symbolo non habentur, constat autem apud nos additos hæreseos causa Sabellii, &c. —*Ruff. in Sym.*

[e] Serm. 62, p. 16, 2.

[f] Maximus Taurinensis.

[g] De vel. Virg. Præscript. adv. hæret. contra Praxeam.

position and use were not known, was presumed to have derived from the apostles, the first planters of that church (as it was then usual to repute all immemorial customs to be deduced from apostolical tradition;) or possibly because the Roman church (as in common belief founded by the two great apostles Peter and Paul) was by way of excellency called *the apostolical church;* and the succession of Roman bishops, *sedes apostolica:* so whatever belonged to that church obtained the same denomination; and among the rest, the Roman symbol might for that reason be called *symbolum apostolicum;* that is, *symbolum ecclesiæ apostolicæ.* For that it was complied by joint advice, or by particular contributions of all the apostles, is a conceit sustained by very weak grounds, and assailed by very strong objections: as, that a matter of so illustrious remarkableness, and of so great concernment, should be nowhere mentioned in the apostolic acts, nor by any authentic record attested (and indeed had it been so testified, it must have attained canonical authority;) that it was not received by all churches; and that those which used the substance thereof, were so bold therewith as to alter and enlarge it, are considerations ordinarily objected thereto: but that which most effectually, to my seeming, doth render such original thereof altogether uncertain (and doth amount almost to a demonstration against it; I mean, against the truth, or, which is all one in matters of this nature, its certainty of being composed by the apostles), is that which I before intimated; viz. that the most ancient (and those the most inquisitive and best seen in such matters) were either wholly ignorant that such a form, pretending the apostles for its authors, was extant, or did not accord to its pretence, or did not at all rely upon the authenticatness thereof; otherwise (as I before urged) it is hardly possible that they should not have in most direct and express manner alleged it, and used its authority against those wild heretics who impugned some points thereof. Nothing can be more evident, than such an argument (as it was more obvious than not to be taken notice of, so it) must needs carry a great strength and efficacy with it; and would have much more served their purpose, for convincing their adversaries, than a rule (of the same sense and import) collected from their own observation, and composed in their own expression; and that argument, which they so much insist upon, drawn from the common consent of the apostolic churches, could not have been more strongly enforced (nor the ground thereof more clearly evidenced), than by propounding the attestation of this form, if such an one there had been commonly received and acknowledged: and if they were ignorant or uncertain thereof, after-times could not be more skilful or sure in the point. I speak not this with intent to derogate from the reputation of this Creed, or to invalidate that authority whereof it hath so long time stood possessed: for, as for the parts thereof, which were undoubtedly most ancient, the matter of them is so manifestly contained in the scripture, and, supposing the truth of Christianity itself, they are so certain, that they need no other authority to support them, than what Christianity itself subsists upon; and, for other points afterwards added, they cannot, by virtue of being inserted there, pretend to apostolic authority, but for their establishment must insist upon some other base. It is, in general, sufficient (that which we acknowledge) to beget a competent reverence thereto, that it was of so ancient use in the principal, and for long time (till ambition and avarice, and the consequences of general confusion, ignorance, corruption, overspreading the the earth, did soil it) the fairest, perhaps, and most sober church in the world; that it was, I say, in so illustrious a place, so near the apostles' time, made and used (and might thence seem probably to derive from some of them), may conciliate much respect thereto: but yet since it is not thoroughly certain that it was composed by any of them, nor hath obtained the same authority with their undoubted writings, whatever is therein contained must be explained according to and be proved by them; and cannot otherwise constrain our faith; and indeed divers authors of great credit acknowledge it to be collected out of the scriptures: *Illa verba* (saith Augustin) *quæ audivistis* (speaking of this Creed) *per scripturas sparsa sunt, et inde collecta, et ad unum redacta.* And another

ancient writer: *De sacris omnino voluminibus quæ sunt credenda sumamus; de quorum fonte symboli ipsius series derivata consistit.*[h] Its authority therefore will at the second hand prove apostolical, its matter being drawn from the fountains of apostolical scripture. But so much shall suffice, for preface, concerning the title and other extrinsecal adjuncts of the Creed. As for the subject itself, it is a short system of Christian doctrine; comprising the chief principles of Christianity, as distinct from all other religions, in a form (or manner of speech) suited for every singular person, thereby to declare his consent to that religion; which to do, as it is especially befitting at baptism (when the person is solemnly admitted to the participation of the benefits and privileges of that religion; and should therefore reasonably be required to profess that he believes the truth thereof, and willingly undertakes to perform the conditions and duties belonging thereto), so it cannot but be very convenient and useful at other times, and deserves to be a constant part of God's service; as both much tending to the honour of God, and conducing to private and public edification: we thereby glorify God, frequently confessing his truth (the chief and highest points of his heavenly truth, by his goodness revealed unto us;) we remind ourselves of our duties and engagements to God; we satisfy the church of our perseverance, and encourage our brethren to persist in the faith of Christ.

As for the interpretation thereof, I shall not otherwise determine or limit its sense, than by endeavouring to declare what is true in itself, and agreeable to the meaning of the words, wherein each article is[s] expressed; proving that such truth by any kind of suitable arguments that offer themselves; such as either the reason of the thing, or plain testimony of holy scripture, or general consent and tradition of the ancient churches, founded by the apostles, do afford. Proving, I say; for the Creed itself (as we before discoursed), not being endued with highest authority to enforce its doctrine, it must be confirmed by such other grounds as may be proved more immediately valid, and efficacious to convince or produce faith in men's minds. For faith itself is not an arbitrary act, nor an effect of blind necessity (we cannot believe what we please, nor can be compelled to believe any thing;) it is a result of judgment and choice, grounded upon reason of some kind, after deliberation and debate concerning the matter. But more distinctly, what the faith we profess to have is, I will immediately inquire; addressing myself to the exposition of the first word, *I believe*, or *I believe in*. Before we proceed, we must remove a rub, which criticising upon the phrase hath put in our way. They give us a distinction between, *to believe a thing*, *to believe a person*, and *to believe upon a thing or person:* for example, taking God for the object, there is, they say, a difference between *credere Deum*, *credere Deo*, and *credere in Deum*. *Credere Deum* doth import simply to believe God to be; *credere Deo*, is to believe God's word or promise (to esteem him veracious;) *credere in Deum*, is to have a confidence in God, as able and willing to do us good (to rely upon his mercy and favour; to hope for help, comfort, or reward from him: the which, after St. Augustine, the schoolmen account an act of charity or love toward God, as may be seen in that late excellent exposition of the Creed;) and in this last sense would some understand the faith here professed, because of the phrase, *I believe in:* but I briefly answer, that this phrase being derived immediately from the Greek of the New Testament, and the Greek therein imitating the Old Testament Hebrew, we must interpret the meaning thereof according to its use there, as that may best agree with the reason of the thing, and the design of the Creed here. Now in the said Greek and Hebrew, πιστεύειν εἰς (or πιστεύειν ἐν or πιστεύειν ἐπί, which import the same), and בְּ הֶאֱמִין (*heemin be*), are used to signify all kinds of faith, and are promiscuously applied to all kinds of objects: it is required to believe not only in God and Christ, but in men also; in Moses, in the prophets; as likewise in the works of God; in God's commandments; in the gospel.[i] Whence in general it appears, that to *believe in*,

[h] Paschasius de Spir. Sanct. Cap. 1.

[i] Exod. xiv. 31; xix. 9; 2 Chron. xx. 20; Psal. lxxviii. 32; cxix. 66; Mark i. 15.

hath not necessarily or constantly such a determinate sense as the fore-mentioned distinguishers pretend, but is capable of various meanings, as the different matters to which it is applied do require: to believe in Moses (for example), was not to confide in his power or goodness, but to believe him God's prophet, and that his words were true; to believe in God's works, was to believe they came from God's power, and signified his providence over them; to believe in the commands of God, and the Gospel of Christ, was to take them for rules of life, and to expect due reward according to the promises or threatenings in them respectively pronounced to obedience or disobedience: in a word, we may observe (and there be instances innumerable to confirm the observation), that, in the New Testament, πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστὸν, εἰς Κύριον, εἰς ὄνομα Κυρίου, and πιστεύειν τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ Κυρίῳ, τῷ ὀνόματι Κυρίου, do indifferently bear the same sense, both signifying no more than being persuaded that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God*, such as he declared himself, and the apostles preached him to be. Since, therefore, the phrase in itself may admit various senses, we may (with most reason and probability) take it here according to the nature and design of the Creed; which is to be a short comprehension of such varieties which we profess our assent unto: it hath, I say, been always taken (not directly for an exercise of our charity, or patience, or hope in God, or any other kind of devotion, but simply) for a confession of Christian principles and verities; and accordingly when I say, *I believe in God Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth;* it is most proper so to understand my meaning, as if I had said, *I believe there is one God; that he is Almighty; that he is Maker of heaven and earth:* and so of the rest: to confirm which interpretation, I shall only add, that anciently πιστεύειν εἰς was commonly applied to the church, to the resurrection, to repentance, and remission of sins: many examples might be produced to that purpose; I shall only mention those words of Jerome: *Solenne est in lavacro post Trinitatis confessionem interrogare, Credis in sanctam ecclesiam?*[j] Which expression, according to the school men's interpretation of *believing in*, were not allowable.

So much for the general notion of belief; it is some kind of assent to the truths propounded in the Creed: but what kind particularly it is, that we may more clearly judge, we shall observe, that *belief* hath two acceptions most considerable; one, more general and popular; the other, more restrained and artificial: in its greatest latitude, and according to most common use (as also according to its origination, from πέπεισται, by which it should import the effect of persuasion), thus, I say, it signifies generally, being well persuaded, or yielding a strong assent unto the truth of any proposition; ἡ σφοδρὰ ὑπόληψις (so we have it defined, agreeably to common use, in Aristotle's Topics;[k]) that is, a vehement or strong opinion about a thing: and so it involves no formal respect to any particular kind of means or arguments productive of it; but may be begot by any means whatever. So we are said to believe what our sense represents, what good reason inffers, what credible authority confirms unto us.* Whence in rhetoric all sorts of probation (from what topic soever of reason deduced, upon whatever attestation grounded) are called πίστεις, by a metonymy, because they are apt to beget a persuasion concerning the cause maintained, its being good or bad, true or false. But according to a more restrained and artificial acception (artificial I call it, because it is peculiar to men of art, and invented by the school, to the purpose of distinguishing such assent or persuasion into several kinds, whereof they make belief in one kind distinct from those others which are grounded upon experience, or appearance to sense; or upon rational inference, according to which acception), belief doth precisely denote that kind of assent which is grounded merely upon the authority (the dictate or testimony) of some person asserting, relating, or attesting to the truth of any matter propounded: the authority, I say, of some person; which implies two things: 1. That such a person hath, *de facto*, asserted or attested the matter; 2. That his qualifications be such

[j] Hieron. contra Lucif.

* So Acts. xvii. 31,—πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν.

[k] Top. iv. 5.

that his affirmation should in reason have an influence upon our minds, and incline them to consent; for that he is both able to inform us rightly, and willing to do it; is so wise, that he doth know; and so just, that he will speak according to his knowledge, and no otherwise. And this authority (which by reason of the author's qualities mentioned is called *credible;* that is such, as in some measure is apt in a well-disposed understanding to beget such an assent to the truth of what is deposed) is one kind of argument (distinct from those which are drawn from experience, or from principles of reason, before known or admitted by us) whereby persuasion concerning the truth of any proposition (concerning either matter of fact, or any doctrine) is produced in our minds: and according to the degrees of our assurance, either concerning the fact, that the author doth indeed assert the matter; or concerning the person's qualifications (rendering his authority credible), are the degrees of our belief proportioned: it is more strong and intense, or weak and remiss; we are confident or doubtful concerning the matter: if we plainly can perceive by our sense, or have great rational inducements to think, that such an assertion proceeds from such an author; and then by like evidence of experience or reason are moved to think him not liable himself to be deceived, nor disposed to deceive us, then we become strongly persuaded; believe firmly, in proportion to the validity of the said grounds.

It is now to be determined according to which of these two acceptions the belief we here profess is to be understood: and to my seeming, we should adequately mean, according to the first, the more general and vulgar notion: that, I say, we profess to be persuaded in our minds, concerning the truth of the propositions annexed, not implying our persuasion to be grounded upon only one kind of reason, that drawn from authority; but rather involving all reasons proper and effectual for the persuasion of all the points jointly, or of each singly taken. In this notion I understand the word, for these reasons:—

1. Upon a general consideration; because the ancient teachers of our religion, both as being themselves men not seen in subtility of speculation, nor versed in niceties of speech (used by men of art and study), and as designing chiefly to instruct the generality of men (for the greatest part being simple and gross in conceit), could not or would not use words otherwise than according to their most common and familiar acception. They did not employ ἀκριβοῦντες ἀκριβεῖς λόγους, terms devised by human wisdom for extreme accuracy and distinction; but expressed their conceptions in the most vulgar and best understood language.[l]

2. Because we find that, *de facto*, the word πιστεύειν is used by them (in scripture, I mean) according to this general notion; that is, so as to signify indifferently all kind of persuasion, having regard to the particular ground thereof. Thomas would not believe that our Saviour was risen, except he discerned visible marks, distinguishing his person from others: he did so, and then believes: whereupon our Saviour saith, *Thou believest, because thou hast seen: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed:*[m] we see that faith may be grounded upon sense. And, *If I do not the works of my Father* (saith our Saviour) *believe me not: but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works.*[n] Our Saviour requires them not to rely upon his bare testimony concerning himself, but to consider rationally the quality of his work; and upon that to ground their faith: which kind of persuasion seems grounded rather upon principles of reason, than any authority. The devils, St. James tells us, do believe *there is one God:*[o] how so? because they know it by experience, rather than upon any relation or testimony given to them. And you know, *He that comes to God, must believe that he is;*[p] that is, must be persuaded of God's existence, by arguments proper to enforce such assent. For I argue further,

3. That the belief of the first and main article of this Creed, that *there is a God*, cannot be grounded only upon authority; human authority cannot alone suffice to prove so great a point; and di-

[l] 1 Cor. ii. 4; εὐαγγελισθεὶς ῥήμα, 2 Pet. i. 16.
[m] John xx. 29.
[n] John x. 37.
[o] James ii. 19.
[p] Heb. xi. 6.

vine authority doth presuppose it: for how can we believe that God doth this or that; that he hath revealed his mind to us; that he teaches us so or so, before we believe that he is? The belief of the subject must precede the belief of any attribute or action belonging to it: the belief, therefore, of God's existence, is properly grounded upon other arguments, beside authority. Yea, further,

4. The belief of other main points, not expressed indeed, but understood and supposed as the foundation of our believing all the other articles thereof, doth depend upon more than bare authority: as for instance, the belief of God's veracity (taken most largely, as including his infallible wisdom, and his perfect sincerity or fidelity;) the truth of God's having actually revealed his mind to us by Jesus and his apostles, and by all the prophets before (or the truth of Christianity itself in gross, as also of ancient Judaism;) the truth of the holy scriptures; the validity of general tradition and common consent of the Christian churches instructed by the apostles, so far as they may conduce to the probation of any of these articles: these things, I say, we must be persuaded of, as grounds of our believing all the other articles not immediately deducible from principles of reason: and yet none of these points can properly be grounded upon mere authority: to prove God is veracious because he saith so, or that revelation in general must be trusted from particular revelations, are *petitiones principii*, most inconclusive and ineffectual discourses. Spirits are to be tried, and revelations themselves are to be examined, before we can upon their word believe any particular doctrine avouched by them:[q] this must be performed by use of our senses and of our reasons; and therefore virtually and mediately the belief of whatever relies upon such foundations doth depend upon them, and not upon bare authority.

5. I will add, lastly, that if we consider the manner how the faith of the first Christians was produced, we may perhaps also perceive that even their faith was not merely founded upon authority, but relied partly upon principles of reason, taking in the assistance and attestation of sense. They that beheld the sincerity and innocency of our Saviour's conversation; the extraordinary wisdom and majesty of his discourses; the excellent goodness and holiness of his doctrine; the incomparably great and glorious power discovered in his miraculous works (withal comparing the ancient prophecies concerning such a person to come with the characters and circumstances of his person;) were by these considerations persuaded, not merely by his own testimony, that our Saviour himself did not so much insist upon, but rather disclaimed it, as insufficient to beget faith: *If I witness of myself, my witness is not true:*[r] (not true; that is, not credible:) you were not obliged to accept my testimony as true, if it were not also accompanied with other convincing reasons. It was by such a syllogism as this, that believers did then argue themselves into faith upon our Saviour: He that is so qualified (doth so live, so speak, so work; so admirably in himself, so agreeably to prophecies foregoing), his pretences cannot reasonably be deemed false; it is just that we assent to his words: But we plainly see and experience Jesus to be so qualified (so to live, to speak, to do:) Therefore it is just and reasonable we believe him. This kind of discourse did *de facto*, and of right it ought to produce faith in those, who come under the influence of it: the being convinced by it was the virtue of faith, showing the ingenuity and discretion of those so wrought upon; and the not being convinced so, was the fault for which unbelievers were liable to just condemnation: *If I had not come and spake to them, they had not had sin:* and, *If I had not done the works among them, which never any other man did, they had not had sin:*[s] that is, If my doctrine had not been very good, and my discourse very reasonable; if my works had not discovered abundance of divine grace and power attending them; had not both my words and works been very open and manifest to them; they had been excusable, as having no reasons cogent enough to persuade them; but now they deserve to be condemned for their

[q] 1 John iv. 1; Matt. vii. 15, 16.

[r] John v. 31.

[s] John xv. 22, 24.

unreasonable and perverse incredulity. And give me leave, by the way, to observe, that by the like syllogism it is, that faith may (and perhaps in duty should) be produced even in us now: the major proposition is altogether the same: A person so qualified is credible; (this is a propositition of perpetual truth, evident to common sense, such as by all men of reason and ingenuity should be admitted: otherwise no message from heaven or testimony upon earth could be received.) The minor, Jesus was a person so qualified, was indeed evident to the senses of those with whom he conversed (to such as were not blinded with evil prejudice, and wilfully disposed to mistake;) and will now appear as true to those who shall with due care consider the reasons by which it may be persuaded: that it is attested by so many, and in all respects so credible histories, yet extant and legible by us; confirmed by so clear, so general, so constant a tradition; maintained by so wonderful circumstances of Providence; in a word, that it is evidenced by so many and so illustrious proofs, that no matter of fact had ever the like, none ever could have greater, to assure it.

Upon these and such like premises I embrace the more plain and simple notion of the word *belief;* meaning, when I say *I believe*, that I am in my mind fully convinced and persuaded of the truth of the propositions hereafter expressed (or implied;) not excluding any objects there contained under any formality (either of being apparent to sense, or demonstrable by reason, or credible by any sort of testimony), nor abstracting from any kind of reasons persuasive of their truth. I believe there is a God, the Creator of the world; that he is infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious; that he hath revealed his mind and will to mankind; as well for that good reason dictates these things unto me, as that the best authorities avow them. I believe that *Jesus is the Christ, and our Lord, and the Son of God*, because the holy scriptures do plainly so teach, and apostolical tradition thereto consents: and in like manner of the rest.

[I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.]

WHAT the phrase, *I believe in*, doth most properly here import, I did endeavour (the last time) somewhat to explain:* I would have deduced some corollaries, and added some considerations preventive of mistake, and further explicative of that matter, if my intention hereafter to endeavour greater brevity did permit:† but for that cause I proceed to the objects of our belief: whereof in the first place, as is meet, and in the front, God is placed; the belief of whose existence is the foundation of all religion, the support of all virtue, the principal article in all the creeds of all the world.‡ He that comes to God (whoever applies himself to any religious performance) must first of all be persuaded that God is; as the object of his devotion, and the rewarder of his obedience. For the explication of which, we will consider, 1. What it is that we are to believe; 2. Why and upon what grounds we should believe it.

For the first: That in the world there are beings imperceptible to our senses, much superior to us in knowledge and power, that can perform works above, and contrary to, the course of nature, and concerning themselves sometime to do so for the interests of mankind; for these qualifications and performances deserving extraordinary respect from us, hath been a constant opinion in all places and times: to which sort of beings some one general name hath been in all languages assigned, answering to that of *God* among us. Of such beings, that there is one, supreme and most excellent, incomparably surpassing in all those attributes of wisdom and power and goodness; from whom the rest, and all things beside, have derived their beings, do depend upon, are sustained and governed by; the author, I say, of all being, and dispenser of all good; to whom consequently supreme love, reverence, and

* Primus est Deorum cultus Deos credere.—*Sen. Ep.* 95.

† Deum colit qui novit.—*Ibid.*

‡ Plut. Εορα καὶ βάσις ὑφιστώσα κοινὴ πρὸς εὐσέβειαν.

obedience is due:* hath been also the general sense of the most ancient, most wise, and most noble nations among men; to whom, therefore, in a peculiar and eminent manner the title of *God* (and those which answer thereto) is appropriated: so that when the word is absolutely put, without any adjunct of limitation or diminution, he only is meant and understood: to which sometimes, for fuller declaration, are added the epithets of *Optimus*, *Maximus*, *Summus*, *Æternus*, *Omnipotens*, *Dominus*, and the like; the Best, the Greatest, the Most High, the Eternal, the Almighty, the Sovereign God. Thus, according to the common sense of mankind, is the word *God* understood; the notion thereof including especially these attributes and perfections of nature; supreme and incomprehensible wisdom, power, goodness, being the fountain and author, the upholder and governor of all things: and what is contracted with, or is consequent upon these; namely, the most excellent manner of being and of activity, eternity, and immortality, independency and immutability, immensity and omnipresence, spirituality and indivisibility, incessant energy of the most excellent life, intuitive understanding, absolute freedom of will, perfect holiness and purity, justice, sincerity, veracity; as also complete happiness (self-enjoyment and self-sufficiency;) glorious majesty, sovereign right of dominion; to which highest veneration and entire obedience is due. In short, whatever our mind can conceive of good, excellent, and honourable, that in the most transcendent degree is, by the consent of mankind, comprehended in the notion of God, absolutely taken, or in the last sense forementioned.

Neither doth divine revelation commend any other notion thereof to us; but explains, amplifies, and confirms this; expressing more clearly and distinctly these attributes and perfections; with the manner of their being exerted, especially to our benefit; and determining our duty in relation to them.

Now, that really such a being doth exist (that this main principle of religion is not a mere *postulatum*, or precarious supposition, which we must be beholden to any reasonable man for to grant us) I shall endeavour to prove briefly by three or four arguments, which are indeed of all most obvious and suitable to every capacity (for they be not grounded upon metaphysical subtlety, nor need any depth of speculation to apprehend them; common sense and experience will suffice to discover their force), and yet of all that have been produced, they seem to me most forcible. The first is drawn from natural effects observable by every man; a second, from the common opinions and practices of mankind from all antiquity; a third, from particular discoveries of such a divine power attested by history; a fourth, from every man's particular experience concerning a divine Providence. And,

1. I say, that natural effects do declare such a Being incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good, from whence this visible world did proceed, and by which it subsists and is conserved. That it is true, which the prophet Jeremiah saith, *That he hath made the earth by his power, hath established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his discretion*, Jer. x. 12. It may be assumed for a principle, which common experience suggests to us, that matter of itself doth not run into any order, &c. if not now, then not yesterday, nor from eternity: it must therefore by some counsel be digested. There is not indeed any kind of natural effect, which either singly taken, or as it stands related to the public, may not reasonably be supposed to contain some argument of this truth: we do not indeed discern the use and tendency of each particular effect; but of many, they are so plain and palpable, that we have reason to suppose them of the rest: even as of a person whom we do plainly perceive frequently to act very wisely, at other times, when we cannot discern the drift of his proceeding, we cannot but suppose that he hath some latent reason, some reach of policy, that we are not aware of: or as in an engine consisting of many parts curiously compacted together, whereof we do perceive the general use, and apprehend how some parts conduce thereto, we have rea-

* Φαμὲν δὲ τὸν Θεὸν εἶναι ζῶον ἀΐδιον ἄριστον.—Arist. Metaph. xii. 7.

Deus summum magnum, et forma et ratione, et vi, et potestate, &c.—*Tertull. advers. Marc.* i. 3.

son, although we either do not see them all, or cannot comprehend the immediate serviceableness of each, to think they all are some way or other subservient to the artist's designs. Such an agent is God, such an engine is this visible world: we can often discover evident marks of God's wisdom; some general uses of the world are very discernible, and how that many parts thereof do contribute to them, we may easily observe: and seeing the whole is compacted in a decent and constant order, we have reason to deem the like of the rest. Our incapacity to discover all doth not argue defect, but excess of the maker's wisdom; not too little in itself, but too great perfection in the work, in respect of our capacity. The most to us observable piece of the universe is the earth, upon which we dwell; which that it was designed for the accommodation of living creatures, that are upon it, and principally of man, we cannot be ignorant or doubtful, if we be not so negligent or stupid as to let pass unobserved those innumerable signs and arguments that show it: if we look upon the frame of the animals themselves, what a number of admirable contrivances in each of them do appear for the sustenance, for the safety, for the pleasure, for the propagation, for grace and ornament, for all imaginable convenience, suitable to the kind and station of each! If we look about them, what variety and abundance of convenient provisions offer themselves even to a careless view, answerable to all their needs and all their desires! Wholesome and pleasant food, to maintain their life, yea, to gratify all their senses; fit shelter from offence, and safe refuge from dangers: all these things provided in sufficient plenty, and commodiously disposed, for such a vast number of creatures; not the least, most silly, weak, or contemptible creature, but we may see some care hath been had for its nourishment and comfort: what wonderful instincts are they endued with, for procuring and distinguishing of their food, for guarding themselves and their young from danger! But for man especially a most liberal provision hath been made, to supply all his needs; to please all his appetites; to exercise, with profit and satisfaction, all his faculties; to content (I might say) his utmost curiosity:* all things about him do minister (or may do so, if he will use the natural powers and instruments given him) to his preservation, ease, and delight. The bowels of the earth yield him treasures of metals and minerals; quarries of stone and coal, serviceable to him for various uses.† The vilest and commonest stones he treadeth upon are not unprofitable. The surface of the earth, what variety of delicate fruits, herbs, and grains, doth it afford, to nourish our bodies, and cheer our spirits, and please our tastes, and remedy our diseases! how many fragrant flowers, most beautiful and goodly in colour, shape, for the comfort of our smell and delight of our eyes! Neither can our ears complain, since every wood hath a choir of natural musicians, to entertain them with their sprightful melody! Every wood, did I say? yes too, the woods, adorned with stately trees, yield pleasant spectacles to our sight, shelter from offences of weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our buildings (our houses and shipping), and other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary for the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance and maintaining of intercourse among us. Even the wide seas themselves serve us many ways: they are commodious for our traffick and commerce: they supply the bottles of heaven with water to refresh the earth: they are inexhaustible cisterns, from whence our springs and rivers are derived: they yield stores of good fish, and other conveniences of life. The very rude and disorderly winds do us no little service, in brushing and cleansing the air for our health; in driving forward our ships; in scattering and spreading about the clouds, those clouds which drop fatness upon our grounds.‡ As for our subjects the animals, it is not possible to reckon the manifold utilities we receive from them: how many ways they supply our needs, with

* Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodo nostris provisum est, usque in delicias amamur. —*Sen. de Benef.* iv. 5; *vide* locum optimum.

† Ut omnis rerum naturæ pars tributum aliquod nobis conferret.—*Ibid.*

‡ Psal. lxv.

pleasant food and convenient clothing; how they ease our labour; and how they promote even our sport and recreation. And are we not, not only very stupid, but very ungrateful, if we do not discern abundance of wisdom and goodness in the contrivance and ordering of all these things, so as thus to conspire for our good? Is it not reasonable that we devoutly cry out with the Psalmist, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches: so is the wide and great sea,*[u] &c. To say this grace with him, *The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season: thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing:*[v] especially to say further, *Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*[w]

Can any man, endued with common sense, imagine that such a body as any of us doth bear about him, so neatly composed, fitted to so many purposes of action, furnished with so many goodly and proper organs; that eye, by which we reach the stars, and in a moment have, as it were, all the world present to us; that ear, by which we so subtly distinguish the differences of sound, are sensible of so various harmony, have conveyed unto our minds the words and thoughts each of other; that tongue, by which we so readily imitate those vast diversities of voice and tune, by which we communicate our minds with such ease and advantage; that hand, by which we perform so many admirable works, and which serves instead of a thousand instruments and weapons unto us; to omit those inward springs of motion, life, sense, imagination, memory, passion, with so stupendous curiosity contrived: can any reasonable man, I say, conceive that so rare a piece, consisting of such parts, unexpressibly various, unconceivably curious, the want of any of which would discompose or destroy us; subservient to such excellent operations, incomparably surpassing all the works of the most exquisite art that we could ever observe or conceive, be the product of blind chance; arise from fortuitous jumblings of matter; be effected without exceeding great wisdom, without most deep counsel and design? Might not the most excellent pieces of human artifice, the fairest structures, the finest pictures, the most useful engines, such as we are wont so much to admire and praise, much more easily happen to be without any skill or contrivance?* If we cannot allow these rude and gross imitations of nature to come of themselves, but will presently, so soon as we see them, acknowledge them the products of art, though we know not the artist, nor did see him work; how much more reasonable is it that we believe the works of nature, so much more fine and accurate, to proceed from the like cause, though invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a secret hand?† I am sure the most diligent contemplators of nature, and those of the most incredulous temper, and freest from any prejudice favourable to religion, have not been able to deny, that abundance of counsel and wisdom discovers itself in the works of nature: Aristotle (whom no man surely takes for superstitious or partial to the interests of religion) hath a whole chapter in his Physics to prove that nature works with design and for an end:[x] and otherwhere he affirms, ἡ φύσις ἕνεκα τῶν πάντα ποιεῖ, Nature doeth all things for some end:[y] yea further, Μᾶλλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα, καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις, ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης· Tending to an end, and endeavouring what is best, is more observable in the works of nature than in those of art.

This he speaketh in his books *De Partibus Animalium*, the consideration of which extorteth this confession from him: and if nature works so much for an end, there must be an understanding that in-

[u] Psal. civ. 24.
[v] Psal. cxlv. 15, 16. [w] Psal. viii. 4, 6.

* Archimedem arbitrantur plus valuisse in imitandis sphæræ conversionibus, quam naturam in efficiendis, &c. p. 86.

† Si ergo meliora sunt ea, quæ natura, quam illa quæ arte perfecta sunt nec ars efficit quicquam sine ratione, ne natura quidem rationis expers est habenda.—*Cic. de Nat. D.* ii. p. 86. ——Quod si mundum efficere potest concursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest, quæ sunt minus operosa, et multo quidem faciliora?—*Ib.* 89.

[x] 2 Phys. c. 3. [y] De Part. Anim.

tends it, and orders fit means for attaining it. Galen is observed in some places of his writings to speak somewhat irreligiously, yet in his books *De Usu Partium* he cannot forbear admiring the wisdom that shines forth in the structure of our bodies, breaking forth sometimes into hymns of praise and thankfulness to him that made it.* The like expressions hath Cardan, such another not over-devout philosopher; and even our own countrymen Mr. Hobbes, how little a friend he otherwise seems to religion, and how ready soever to deride those that by reason endeavour to prove *there is a God*, yet being overcome by the evidence of the thing, hath somewhere let fall these words: *Itaque* (saith he) *ad sensus procedo: satis habens si hujusmodi res attigero tantum, plenius autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui si machinas omnes tum generationis tum nutritionis satis perspexerint, nec tamen eas a mente aliqua conditas, ordinatasque ad sua quasque officia viderint, ipsi profecto sine mente esse censendi sunt.*[z]

Neither doth the force of this argument subsist here, but, as we intimated, the correspondence and relation of outward things to our needs, appetites, and capacities, doth mightily confirm it: if we had organs of nutrition, and nothing to feed them; senses, and nothing to prove or please them; hands and feet, without means or cause to use them, we might have some reason to think these things made causelessly and vainly: but it is, we see, altogether otherwise; all things are accommodated for us, so that we could not wish or conceive better: which to them who will not perversely dote, cannot but argue, not a wisdom only, but an exceeding benignity, careful and tender of our good.†

Thus much the most common and obvious effects of nature here below, within us and about us, do signify to us: thus, as St. Paul preached, *God hath not left himself unattested*, doing good, sending us from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness:* nor do the heavens less declare the glory of God, and the firmament his handy-work:† he that shall consider with what regularity and what constancy those vast bodies perform their rapid motions; what pleasure, comfort, and advantage, their goodly light doth yield us; how necessary and profitable to us the vicissitudes of time and recourses of seasons are, which they make; how their influences conduce to the general welfare and preservation of things even here below, cannot but wonder, and wondering adore that beneficent wisdom and power that hath disposed and still preserves them in such order.‡ Could they without a wise hand, by a casual running together of atoms, or whatever senseless matter, be so ordered, as for six thousand years together to persist in the same places, and retain the same periods of time, in their motion, without any sensible alteration? He that can think it, may think any thing, and it were in vain to endeavour to confute him: how much more reasonable is that heathen philosopher, who thus speaks? *Esse præstantem aliquam, æternamque naturam et eam suspiciendam, adorandamque hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri.*‖

* Ἡ φύσις οὐδὲν ἀλόγως, οὐδὲ μάτην ποιεῖ.—De Cœlo, ii. 11.——Οὐδὲν τῶν καλῶν εἰκῇ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε γίνεται, ἀλλὰ μετά τινος τέχνης δημιουργούσης.—Plut. de Placitis P. i. 6.——Cujus (naturæ) solertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex consequi possit imitando.—*Cic. de N. D.* p. 83.

† Quis hunc hominem dixerit, qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, tamque inter se connexa et apta viderit, neget in his ullam inesse rationem, eaque casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus?—*Cic.* ii. *De Nat. D* p. 90.

Who will call him a man, &c.—ἡ φύσιν ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον· Ἀεί τε γὰρ ἥλιος, καὶ σελήνη, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἀστέρων τὴν ὑτόγειον φορὰν ἐνεχθέντα, ὅμοια μὲν ἀνατέλλει τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἴσα δὲ τοῖς μεγέθεσι, καὶ κατὰ τόπους καὶ κατὰ χρόνους τοὺς αὐτούς.—Plut. de Plac. Phil. i. 6.

* οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἑαυτὸν ἀφῆκεν.—Acts iv. 17.

† An cum machinatione quadam moveri aliquid videmus, ut sphæram, ut foras, ut alia permulta, non dubitamus quin illa opera sint rationis; cum autem impetum cœli admirabili cum celeritate moveri, vertique videamus constantissime conficientem vicissitudines anniversarias cum summa salute, et conservatione rerum omnium, dubitamus quin ea non solum ratione fiant, sed etiam excellenti quadam divinaque ratione?—*Cic.* ii. *de N. D.* 90.

‡ Quid potest esse tam apertum, tamque perspicuum, cum cœlum suspeximus, cœlestiaque contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur?—*Cic.* ii. *de N. D.* p. 53.

‖ Cic. ii. de Divin.—Quod si omnes mundi partes ita constitutæ sunt, ut neque ad usum

[z] De Homine, cap. 1.

But this argument is infinite and inexhaustible; as full and pregnant as is the world of creatures; each of which is a wonder, and proclaims the incomprehensible wisdom, power, and goodness of its Maker to us: we cannot without stopping our eyes exclude that light of divine glory, which fills and illustrates the world;[a] without stopping our ears, we cannot but hear that universal shout (that real harmony of the spheres) which all creatures in heaven and earth consent in utterance to his praise. Every star in heaven, every beast upon earth, every plant, every mineral, yea every stone; some in a language very loud and express proclaim, others in a more still and low (yet to an attentive ear sufficiently audible and significant) strain, do speak those most glorious properties of God:* *There is no speech or language, where their voice is not heard; their accent is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world,* as the Psalmist sings. The τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, as St. Paul speaks, the cognoscibility of God, is manifest in and by them:[b] and the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and divinity, are perceived by observing the makes or constitutions of the creatures in the world; as St. Paul's words may be rendered, with which I conclude this argument.

2dly, That *there is a God*, is proved by the general consent of mankind concerning it; by that *testimonium*, as Lactantius speaks, *populorum atque gentium in una hac re non dissidentium;*[c] that unanimous testimony of all people and nations not disagreeing in this only point. If the authority of some particular men, agreeing in vote, of one city, of one nation, doth pass for an argument, and shows the thing probable, how can we decline or contemn the common suffrage of mankind? He had need have a very clear and strong reason for it, who will dare to dissent from all the world. Hear Seneca thus discoursing: *Multum dare solemus præsumptioni omnium hominum; apud nos veritatis argumentum est, aliquid omnibus videri; tanquam Deos esse sic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio iosita est; nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moresque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat: Cum de animarum æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum, aut timentium inferos, aut colentium.*[d] That is, we are wont to attribute much to what all men presume; it is an argument with us of truth, that any thing seems true to all: as that there be Gods, we hence collect, that all men have implanted in them an opinion concerning the Gods; neither is there any nation so destitute of laws and manners, that it doth not believe there be some Gods.

In like manner Cicero: *Itaque inter omnes omnium gentium sententia constat: omnibus enim innatum est, et in animo quasi insculptum, esse Deos; quales sint varium est, esse nemo negat.*[e] It is therefore an opinion manifest among all men of all nations, and, as it were, engraven in their minds, that there be Gods: how qualified they are, there is a difference; that they are, none denies.

Even Nelleius, the Epicurean, in his disputation against creation and providence, yet acknowledges there are Gods, being compelled, as he saith, by this argument:[f] *Cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio constituta, maneatque ad unum omnium firma consensio, intelligi necesse est esse Deos, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus. De quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est; esse igitur Deos confitendum est,* &c.[g] For since, saith he, not by any institution or custom or law this opinion is established, and among all (not excepting one) a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; because we have implanted or rather inbred opinions of them. But about whatever thing all men naturally agree, that must needs be true; therefore we must confess there be Gods.

Aristotle: Πάντες γὰρ ἄνθρωποι περὶ

meliores potuerint esse, neque ad speciem pulchriores, &c.—*De N. D.* ii. p. 85.——Καλὸν ποίκιλμα τέκτονος σοφοῦ.—Eurip. de Mundo, apud Plut. de Plac. i. 6.

* Quocunque te flexeris, ibi illum videbis occurrentem tibi, &c.—*Senec. Benef.* iv. 8; Psal. xix.

[a] *Vide* Tertull. adv. Marc. i. 13.

[b] Rom. i. 19.

[c] Lact. i. 2.

[d] Epist. 117; *vide* Gr. de V. R. p. 37; De Jure B. ac P. ii. 20, 45.

[e] De Nat. D. ii. p. 57; *Vide* p. 53.

[f] De N. D. i. p. 22.

[g] *Vide* Tusc. Q. i. p. 299.

θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν, καὶ πάντες τὸν ἀνωτάτῳ τῷ θείῳ τόπον ἀποδιδόασι καὶ Βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες.[h] That is, all men have an opinion concerning the Gods, and all men (both Barbarians and Greeks) do assign to the Divinity the highest place in the world (viz. they believe his habitation to be in heaven.)

The author of the book *De Mundo* (attributed to Aristotle, and dedicated to Alexander the Great:) Ἀρχαῖος μὲν οὖν τις λόγος καὶ πάτριός ἐστι, πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς ἐκ Θεοῦ τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ Θεοῦ ἡμῖν συνέστηκεν.[i] There is then indeed a certain ancient saying, and familiar to all men, *That from God all things, and by God all things subsist unto us.*

I allege these authorities, selected from many others producible to the same purpose, from the wisest heathens (that is, from witnesses in this cause most impartial and unsuspected), not only to strengthen the argument, but to evidence the matter of fact upon which it is grounded; to whose testimony all histories both ancient and modern do consent.

Nor doth the force of this discourse rely merely upon the authority of mankind, thus consenting in opinion (though that, as I said, is not contemptible), but upon a much more solid foundation; and that is, upon the manner of this opinion, its being produced in men, and propagated. That men should so conspire must necessarily proceed either from that such an opinion was put into them by nature (by way of natural notion or instinct, as the first most evident principles of science, and the most powerful instincts (after what is good) are supposed innate), at least a very near disposition to entertain and embrace it; or that some very manifest and prevalent reason (obvious to all, even the most rude and barbarous) did beget this agreement in them; or that it was derived from some common tradition, some one common fountain of instruction to them. Be it which of these ways it will, that this opinion became so universally instilled into men's minds, the argument carries great weight and validity. If nature either plainly forces men, or strongly inclines them to this persuasion, it is a vain extravagancy to oppose it; but if it came (as most probably to my seeming it did) from primitive tradition, it argues mankind to have proceeded from one stock, from some one or few men at first gathered together; of whose original who could be more credible witnesses than themselves? If they did testify and teach their posterity that they came from God, why should we disbelieve them? especially seeing, whence else should they come? Who should form their bodies, who should infuse their reasons, who should instil this very notion into them, we cannot well imagine: of themselves they could not be (what such thing as a man did we ever observe, or can we conceive, to spring up of itself?) nor is there any other cause here, to which (without great fondness) we can attribute their original. It is true, that original tradition did by degrees over the world (by the Devil's malice and man's infirmity or wickedness) degenerate into many shapes of polytheism and idolatry;[j] but so was Judaism depraved by the Scribes; and Christianity itself hath been much debased by a long course of bad times; yet who doubts but that they both derived from one pure instruction; that of Moses, and this of Christ our Lord? It is very observable what Aristotle hath concerning this matter, being spoken with so much judgment:[k] It was delivered by our ancestors, saith he, and the ancients, being left in fabulous dress to posterity, that these are Gods, and that a Divinity contains all nature: but other things concerning religion were fictitiously superinduced, for the inveigling of the vulgar, and for accommodation of laws, and the public utility. Hence they speak of them as of having human shape, or being like to other animals, and other things suitable to these, and agreeable to what is spoken; of which things, if we, making a separation, take only what was first delivered, that they thought the Gods the first substances, he may suppose it divinely spoken; seeing it is probable, every art and philosophy being invented (as things would bear), and afterward decayed, that such opinions as relics should be preserved even until now. The opinion of our fathers, and that which was derived from the first

[h] De Cœlo, i. [i] Cap. 6.

[j] *Vide* Plat. Tim. p. 1053.—ἀδύνατον θεῶν παισὶν ἀπιστεῖν, &c. [k] Metaph. xii. 8.

man, is therefore only thus far manifest unto us. So Aristotle expressly.

To confirm which discourse (and to prevent further objections against it), we may consider, that (however perhaps among some very barbarous nations this tradition may have been almost worn out by time and men's stupid negligence) yet the most ancient histories (that of Moses especially, the far most ancient of all, and in this matter to no man incredible) do attest that this opinion was most universal, running in a most strong and clear current among the eastern people, the Chaldeans, Phenicians, and Egyptians; who that they were most ancient people, from whom the rest were propagated, the multitude of people, the antiquity of dominion, the use of letters, the rise of arts, the greater progress in all kind of civil culture (all which things argue longer continuance in one place and state), do plainly enough show; whose consent, therefore, doth involve that of all men beside, and confirms this general opinion to arise from the clear spring of our first parents' instruction. I might add, the same manner of worshipping God (by invocation, by consulting him in way of oracle, by consecrating temples and altars, by vows and dedications, by sacrifices and oblations), which likewise men did anciently agree in, doth also agrue that all religion did proceed from one simple original institution, or instruction common to all mankind. But I cannot insist upon and pursue every particularity.

A third argument of God's existence is from the discoveries of a divine power in works that cannot be ascribed to any other cause, visible or natural. Such are the prediction and presignification of future events (especially such as are contingent, and depend upon man's free choice;) curing the sick of great chronical distempers without any medicinal applications, restoring limbs to persons maimed, sight to the blind, and raising the dead to life (a thing which Pliny deems impossible to God himself:*) these and such like things all men will confess do surpass the power of any natural agent to effect, and are performable only by a cause whose power exceeds our comprehension. Now that such effects have been performed, we cannot deny, without belying the most credible records of history that are extant; without accusing all ages not only of extreme folly and weak credulity, but of notorious forgery and imposture; without derogating from the common credit of mankind, and rendering all testimony, that can be yielded to matter of fact, ineffectual and insignificant: *Vetus opinio est* (saith Tully concerning prediction of future events) *jam usque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque et populi Romani, et omnium gentium firmata consensu, versari quandam inter homines divinationem, quam Græci* μαντικὴν *appellant, id est præsentionem, et scientiam rerum futurarum.*[m] There is an ancient opinion until now drawn even from the heroical times (that is, from utmost antiquity), that there is among men a certain divination, which the Greeks call *prophecy* (or *inspiration*), that is, a presention and knowledge of future things;* of which even the heathen story doth afford many instances, but the holy scriptures most evident and eminent ones: such as that to Abraham concerning his children's sojourning and being afflicted four hundred years in Egypt: of the prophet (some hundred years before) concerning Josias; of Isaiah concerning Cyrus; of Jeremiah concerning the duration of the captivity; of Daniel concerning the revolutions of empire in the world, wherein the achievements of Alexander and his successors are so expressly described:[n] and for miraculous works, although all nations have had so many of them performed among them, as to beget a common opinion that God did frequently interpose so as to al-

* —— Ne Deum quidem posse omnia: namque nec sibi potest mortem consciscere quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ pœnis; nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos —*Lib.* ii. c. 7.

[l] *Vide* Cic. de Nat. p. 54.

* That the prediction of future events did belong only to the supreme God, even the heathens seemed to know and acknowledge. The wise poet, Æn. 3,—

Accipite ergo animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta,
Quid Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando.

Serv.—Notandum Apollinem quæ dicit a Jove cognoscere.

[m] De Divin. init.; De Nat. ii. p. 54.

[n] Gen. xv. 13; 1 Kings xiii. 2; Isa. xliv. and xlv.; Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10; Dan. viii. 21.

ter the course of nature, yet the holy scriptures do most fully testify concerning them in great number, performed for the confirmation of divine truth and discovery of God's will to men, for the relief and encouragement of good, the discouragement and chastisement of bad men; which are the proper causes in all reason why they should be performed: and why that testimony should not be received, there can no good reason be assigned; why it should, there is very great reason; upon which I did formerly touch, and cannot now stand to enlarge thereupon: and indeed God's patefaction of himself to mankind (his speaking to the fathers in many ways, and lastly to all the world by his Son, sent on purpose from heaven to reveal his designs of mercy and favour to mankind), accompanied with so many prodigious miracles, and so many glorious circumstances of providence, visible to all the world, and so accommodated, as in the first place to beget this belief in us, is an argument that cannot but in all honest and well-disposed minds obtain effect.[o] To this head belong those opinions and testimonies of mankind concerning apparitions, of which the ancient world (their poets and historians) spake so much, all which probably could not be devised without ground; concerning the power of enchantment, to which some invisible power must co-operate; concerning conjuration, witchery, all intercourse and confederacy with bad spirits; which he that supposes to be all mere delusion must somewhat over-rudely and immodestly suspect the world of exceeding vanity and credulity, many worthy historians of inconsiderateness, &c., most lawmakers of great rashness and folly, most judicatories of indiscretion or cruelty, and too great a number of witnesses of extreme malice or madness;[p] the truth and reality of which things being admitted, inferring the existence of invisible powers (though inferior ones), doth by consequence infer (at least confer much to) the belief of the divine existence, removing the chief obstacles of incredulity. But I cannot further insist upon this point.

4. The last argument I mentioned was divine providence:[q] which being of two sorts (general, in the government of mankind; particular, in God's dealing with each single person), although to him that will carefully attend and reflect upon it (that, to use the Psalmist and the Prophet's language, will *regard the work of the Lord, and consider the operation of his hands*), even the general providence doth afford no small evidences of his existence[r] (he that shall observe the strange detections of mischief, both that which is designed and that which hath been committed; the restraints, disappointments, and exemplary punishments of oppression and injustice, and all wickedness (when it grows outrageous and exorbitant;) the supports, encouragements, and seasonable vindications (often by unexpected means) of innocence and goodness; the maintenance of such rules and orders in the world, that notwithstanding the irregularity and violence of men's passions, they commonly shift to live tolerably in peace and safety; the so many poor, weak, and helpless people (among so many crafty, malicious, and greedy ones) being competently provided for; the reparations of good manners and piety, being decayed and overborne by power and ill custom; these, I say, and other such occurrences in the world, he that shall consider wisely, may discern the hand of a wise and good Providence watching over human affairs;) but yet seeing commonly the reasons of God's proceedings with men here are various, mysterious, and secret; not to be distinctly apprehended by us (who, for example, can certainly and easily distinguish between God's merciful patience toward bad men, and his gracious recompensing the good;[s] between his just vengeance of one, and his paternal correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice, by either adverse or prosperous accidents, and his exercising the other's virtue by the like;) and because God's governance hath not its complete issue here (this being not the only nor the chief place of reward or punishment), therefore we cannot now with so clear evidence demonstrate the divine attributes from general providence; but are

[o] Heb. i.
[p] *Vide* Grot. de Verit. i. 18; Tert. de An. 46.
[q] Aristotle de Gener.
[r] Isa. v. 12; Psal. xxviii. 5.
[s] *Vide* Gr. de Ver. 63, &c.

here forced by perverse antagonists to be sometime on the defensive; being sufficiently able in this point to defend ourselves, but not so able hence to convince such sturdy adversaries: it is only the children of wisdom here, that will justify her;* therefore I wave that plea: but for particular providence, I dare appeal to most men, especially to those who have ever had any fear of God or sense of goodness, if sometime or other in their lives they have not in their needs (especially upon their addresses to God) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an indiscernible hand; if they have not, sometimes in an unaccountable manner, escaped grievous dangers; if they have not experienced, in performance of their duty and devotion toward God, a comfort extraordinary; if they cannot apply that of the Psalmist to some events of their life: *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles: The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them: O taste and see that the Lord is good! O taste and see:*[t] if God's goodness may be felt and seen by us, then is our own experince an argument of his existence:† which indeed it is to all good men (for whose comfort and confirmation I mention it;) though it is not likely to have much influence upon those that have driven God's presence out of their souls; except they have so much ingenuity as to believe others' testimony, who assert this great truth to them from their own inward conscience and experience.

I have insisted too long upon this subject, it being so rich and copious that I could not easily get out of it; nor can I much repent thereof, it being of so great consequence thoroughly to be persuaded of this point: the deeper and more strongly this foundation is laid, the more stable will the superstructure of religious practice be thereupon; and I fear most of that coldness and imperfection which appears therein, doth arise chiefly from the weakness of our faith in this very article.

1. I shall only further observe one or two particulars: first, that the preceding arguments, as they do most immediately evince those three principal attributes of God, his incomprehensible wisdom, power, and goodness; so, in conjunction with (or consequence from) them, they do declare those his other attributes (which are ingredients also of that notion, which in the beginning of this Discourse I described), namely, the eternity and indefectibility of his existence; his immense omnipresence; his spirituality: as also his justice and veracity; his rightful sovereignty of dominion, and the like; (for I cannot prosecute all the divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of distinction which our conceit and expression doth make of them:) if God made all things, he could not receive being from another; (and he who made this world, what reason can we have to suppose him from another?) nor can any thing receive being of itself; nor from mere nothing, of itself spring up into being: therefore the Maker of the world is eternal: something must be eternal, otherwise nothing could be at all; other things show themselves to have proceeded from the wisdom and goodness of one; that one therefore is eternal; and so all nations consent; and so revelation declares: that he is immortal and immutable, doth as plainly follow: for not depending for his being on any thing belonging to it, neither can he depend for his continuance or conservation: having superior power to all things, as having conferred to all whatever of power they have, nothing can make any prevalent impression upon him so as to destroy or alter any thing in him: from his making, and from his upholding, and from his governing all things, it follows that he was and is everywhere: where his power is, there his hand must be: for nothing can act upon what is distant; every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient: that he doth penetrate all things with his presence and power, operating insensibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the spirit-

* This is a place where God permits men to act much according to their freedom, not interposing but upon great reason, and they have here γνῶμα κρίσεως.—Chrys.

† Indeed this opinion being not fixed steadily in men's persuasion, there can be no steady bottom of virtuous practice: no, nor to a wise man any comfortable life: τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κένῳ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κένῳ, saith that noble emperor nobly: τί καὶ ἐπιθύμω εἰκαίῳ συγκρίματι καὶ φύρμῳ τοιούτῳ ἐνδιατρίβειν· to live in such a blind confusion, &c.—ii. 2; vi. 10.

[t] Psal. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8.

uality of his being; and that he doth not consist of such matter, as all the things we feel and perceive do: his overreaching wisdom argues him incapable of being deceived; and his overbearing power shows that he doth not need to deceive; and his transcendent goodness proves him unwilling to deceive or injure any: from whence is consequent his perfect veracity and justice.* The excellency of his nature, the eminency of his wisdom and power, the excess of his goodness, and his having first given being, and then preserving it to all things, do declare his rightful title to supreme dominion; and accordingly that all love, esteem, worship, and obedience is due to him; according to that devout acknowledgment of the blessed elders in the Apocalypse: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and the honour and the power* (or authority:) *because thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are and were created.*[u]

I might add, that the constitution of our own souls doth show and confirm divers of God's attributes: it is not reasonable to think that our Maker made us to admire other qualities than such as are in him: therefore, since we love and esteem and admire goodness, mercifulness, &c. and dislike the opposites; therefore God is in the highest degree good and gracious, &c.

I observe, secondly, that in this article the unity of God is implied (the authors of the Creed thought it sufficiently signified by the singular number;) the which in other ancient creeds was expressed: *Orientis ecclesiæ omnes ita tradunt*, saith Ruffin; *Credo in unum Deum Patrem omnipotentem.* All the churches of the east thus express it: *I believe in one God, the Father Almighty.* So in Irenæus's Creed it runs: *Ecclesia quaqua per universum orbem terrarum usque ad fines terræ dispersa ab apostolis et ipsorum discipulis fidem accepit, quæ est in unum Deum omnipotentem, qui fecit cœlum, et terram, et maria, et omnia quæ in eis sunt.*

And in all Tertullian's forms: *Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis et irreformabilis, credendi scilicet in unicum Deum omnipotentem, mundi conditorem.*[v]

Regula fidei; qua creditur unum omnino Deum esse, nec alium præter mundi conditorem:[w] and in Irenæus and Tertullian's form, it is likewise expressed, as also in the Nicene Creed afterwards: and this is a main point of our belief, distinguishing us from pagans and idolaters; who ascribed the incommunicable attributes of the one God, and imparted the religious veneration due only to him, unto false deities, invented by themselves, or suggested by bad spirits; thereby greatly wronging God and themselves: robbing him of his due honour, and themselves of that protection and aid, which God is ready to impart to them who faithfully serve and humbly invoke him.

Now this truth the precedent arguments do also manifestly enough infer: the uniformity, concord, and perfect harmony which appears in the constitution and conservation of things; their conspiring to one end, their continuing in the same order and course, do plainly show it: even as the lasting peace of a commonwealth (composed of different persons and humours) argues one law that regulates and contains them; and the orderly march of an army shows it managed by one conduct; and the uniformity of a house, or of a city, declares it contrived by one architect.

And thereto also the common suffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for that there was one supreme God, the author and governor of the rest (and of all other things), transcending in power and wisdom and all kind of perfection, was evidently the common opinion; whom therefore we see the poets do style, *the Father of gods and men; the King of the gods;* ὕψιστος, μέγιστος, κράτιστος: *the highest, greatest, most excellent God.**

Even the vulgar had this conceit: but the wisest of them had more clear and full apprehensions of this unity; and commonly they speak of God but as of one, whom he calls Πατέρα καὶ Ποιητὴν:

* Ψευδηγορᾶν γὰρ οὐκ ἐπίσταται στόμα τὸ δίδυ.—Æschyl. Prom.

[u] Rev. iv. 11.

* *Vide* Tertull. adv. Marc. i. 10.—denique major popularitas generis humani, &c.

[v] De velandis virginibus.

[w] de Præscript.

so Plato refers the making of the world to one: and Aristotle, when he hath occasion to speak of God, doth usually speak in the singular number;[x] and so do other philosophers; and sometime expressly they signify their opinion to be, that *there is but one.* There are many popular gods, but one natural, Antisthenes said in Tully: *εἷς δὲ ὢν πολυώνυμός ἐστι*, saith the author *De Mundo.*[y] Being one in reality, he hath many names, according to the several affections he discovers, and the operations he exerts; whom Seneca thus consents to: *Quoties voles tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare; tot appellationes ejus esse possunt, quot munera; hunc et Liberum Patrem, et Herculem ac Mercurium nostri putant; sic hanc naturam voca, fatum, fortunam; omnia ejusdem Dei nomina sunt varie utentis sua potestate.**

But divine revelation doth most fully declare this truth: I need not mention places; the whole scripture doth chiefly teach and inculcate it, That there is but one Maker and one Governor of the world to whom all veneration and obedience is due: and to whom be all honour, and glory, and worship for ever ascribed and paid, &c. Amen.†

It was anciently objected by Celsus, and other adversaries of our religion, Christianity did exact of men a blind, groundless belief; that it condemned human wisdom, banished understanding, and prohibited all inquiry; commanding men to swallow its dictates without any previous examination or debate concerning the truth of them; imposing *νόμους ἀναποδείκτους*, laws uncapable of proof, and inculcating this rule, *μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ μόνον πίστευε*: Do not examine, but only believe.‡

The ground of this accusation seems to be a great mistake, proceeding from the not distinguishing that belief whereby we embrace Christianity itself in general and in gross, and the belief whereby we assent to the particular doctrines thereof (especially such as concern matters supernatural, and above the reach of our understanding to find out or comprehend.)

As for the first, that faith whereby we embrace Christianity in the gross, I say, that Christianity doth not propound itself as immediately evident, nor requires a precipitate assent to it; but offers blind reason for itself, and invites men to inquire, consider, and judge about its truth: never any religion was so little liable to this censure; none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason: it desires of men an *εὐγνώμον ἐξέτασις*, a candid and discreet examination for its sake and their own: other religions have for their justification insisted upon the example of ancestors, and custom of times; their large extent and prevalence among many people; their establishment by civil laws, and the countenance of secular power (arguments extrinsic to the matter, and very weak in themselves), declining all other test or trial of reason: and it is remarkable, how Celsus and those (who made the foresaid objection) did therein contradict themselves, when they affirm men ought, without scruple, to conform to the religion prescribed by the laws of their country, be they what they will, never so absurd or dishonest;[z] this is indeed an exacting of irrational belief; a stifling of our understandings and muzzling our judgment; a requiring of men to yield their consent to innumerable most palpable falsehoods and inconsistencies. The teachers and defenders of Christianity proceeded otherwise: confiding in the truth and reasonableness of their cause, they excited men to lay aside all unreasonable prejudices; to use their best understandings; to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth: hear Lactantius speaking for the rest: *Oportet in ea re maxime, in qua vitæ ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque judicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam, et perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ip-*

* Sen. de Benef. iv. 7; *vide* Lactant; *vide* Sophoclis dictum apud Grot. excerpt. p. 149; *εἷς ταῖς ἀληθείαισιν, εἷς ἐστιν, Θεὸς*, &c.

† *Notab. Marsil. Fic. arg.* 10. *de Leg.*—Sed ne turbet quæso Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot possunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.

‡ *Ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν.*—Orig. i.

[x] *Vide* Hug. Grot. de Jure B. ac. P. lib. ii. c. 20. sect. 45; De Ver. Rel. Chr. p. 37; Max. Tyr. i.

[y] Cic. 1. de N. D.; Arist. de Mundo, cap. 7.

[z] Orig. v. p. 248, &c.

sum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione sapientiam, ut et inaudita investigare possent, et audita perpendere:[a] that is, We ought especially, every one of us, in that matter which chiefly concerns our life, to confide in ourselves; and rather with our own judgment and our proper senses strive to find out and weigh the truth, than, believing other men's errors, to be deceived as men void of reason: God hath given all men their share of wisdom, that they might both inquire into what they hear, and weigh it. So he disputing against the heathen credulity.

Thus doth Christianity call upon men to inquire into itself; yea, it obliges them thereto: it propounds faith as a virtue highly commendable (supposing it therefore voluntary and managed with reason;) for all virtue is ἕξις προαιρετικὴ μετ' ἀληθοῦς λόγου, it is ἑκούσιος συγκατάθεσις, a voluntary assent, promising ample rewards thereto; and infidelity it propounds as a vice very blameable (and consequently very irrational), threatening very severe punishments thereto: it doth not inveigle men by sleight, nor compel them by force; but fairly persuades them to embrace it: it doth not therefore avoid examination, nor disclaim the use of good reason; but seeks and procures the one, cheerfully and confidently appeals to the other.

Indeed, after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth and certainty of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial consent (without exception) to all its particular doctrines grounded upon them: when, I say, it hath propounded sufficient reason to satisfy men's minds that it is grounded upon most solid principles, it then requires men to surcease further doubt or scruple concerning what it teaches: which is a most reasonable proceeding, and conformable to the method used in the strictest sciences: for the principles of any science being either demonstrated out of some higher science, or evidenced by fit examples and experiments to common sense, and being thence admitted, it is afterward unlawful and absurd to refuse the conclusions deduced from them: so it having been proved that our principles are true; (viz. that God is perfectly veracious; and that Christian religion did proceed from him, and is built upon his attestation;) it is a part of absurd levity and self-contradiction then to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein: and in this sense it is true (and thus I take those Christians to be understood who commend immediate faith, and exclude reason from being too busy in matters of religion, and discountenance curious inquiry;[b]) thus, I say, it is true that Christianity engages us to believe without reason or dispute. It will allow (yea, it invites and exhorts) an infidel to consider and judge of its truth; but it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconstant as to question any particular of its doctrine: by doing so he renounces his faith, at least ceases to be a steady Christian.

Now the first principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other religions) is, that *there is one God:* the next (which also no religion doth not acknowledge), that God is perfectly veracious; or, that whatever appears to be asserted or attested to by God is certainly true: which two principles we have already proved by reasons proper and sufficient, we conceive, to satisfy any well-disposed mind. A third principle is, that God is the author of the Christian doctrine in general; that it hath been revealed and imposed upon mankind by divine authority. And a fourth is, that those authorities and traditions upon which we ground, and by which we prove (mediately or immediately), the particular doctrines of Christianity to be truly such (that is, admitting the former principle to have come from God), are proper and sufficient to that purpose. These two latter principles involving matter of fact, and consequently being not evident in themselves, do (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid persuasion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe like reasonable men, not upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance (as Pagans and Mahometans, and other ignorant opinionists do), as also to confirm the grounds upon which the subsequent articles or doctrines of faith are built, I shall endeavour briefly to show the reasonableness of them: be-

[a] Lib. ii. c. 7.

[b] *Vide* Orig. pag. 9.

ginning with the first, and advancing my discourse by several steps or degrees. And I observe, that,

1. It is reasonable to suppose that God should sometime reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as they stand related toward him; (his nature and will, our state and duty;) his prime attributes persuade thus much. It is most evident to common experience that mankind, being left to itself (in matters of this nature especially), is very insufficient to direct itself; it is apt to lie under a woful ignorance; to be possessed with vain conceit; to wander in doubt, and fall into error: it is subject to all kind of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtility of naughty men, or the wildness of its own unruly passions and desires, can bring it under; and consequently it is liable to incur all those sins (dishonourable, hurtful, and destructive to its nature), and all those miseries, which from ignorance, error, and sin, do naturally spring (an estrangement especially from God, and his grievous displeasure:) we see that not only the generality of mankind did sometime lie in this sad condition, but that even the most elevated and refined wits, those among men who by all possible improvement of their reason did endeavour to raise and rescue themselves from the common ignorance, mistakes, superstitions, and follies of the world, could by no means, in any good measure, attain their end: what did their diligent studies and inquiries produce, but dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did there eager disputations conclude, but in irreconcilable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainty than at first? most were plunged into a desperate scepticism (a doubt and diffidence of all things;) none arrived higher than some faint conjectures, or some unsteady opinions, concerning those matters of highest consequence: ἐμωραιώθησαν, ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς: they were, as St. Paul observed, made vain (were frustrated and befooled) in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened, &c.[c] The world by wisdom did not know God: could not attain to a requisite measure of knowledge in divine things.[d] This being the natural state of men, destitute of divine help and direction, doth it not, I pray, greatly need another light to guide it in this darkness, a helpful hand to relieve it from these inconveniences? Can, then, that infinite goodness hear mankind groan under so lamentable oppressions, and not pity it? can he behold his own dear offspring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless a distress, without affording some relief? Can such a spectacle delight that gracious eye? or can he forbear long to remove it out of his sight? His goodness makes it highly improbable that he should: we account it great want of goodness, not to direct a bewildered traveller; not to relieve, if we can, a person greatly distressed? And if we, being bad, often perform such good offices to one another; how much more ready should we think him, that is goodness itself to do the like for all mankind so much needing it! His wisdom also gives us to suppose the same: if God made the world to express his goodness and manifest his glory, is it likely he should suffer himself to be utterly frustrated in his design, by letting men continue in ignorance and doubt concerning who it was that made it, and how he governs it? Who but men can admire his excellent perfections, and render him his due honour; and how can they do it, without competent knowledge, and full persuasion concerning him? Doth not God expect duty and service from men? would he not have the world proceed in some good order? doth he not desire the good of men, and delight in their happiness? And then, being infinitely wise, must he not dispose fit means for accomplishing these ends? will he not provide, that himself be not totally disappointed? So his wisdom grounds an argument for divine revelation: he had made an inward faculty of seeing in vain, if he had not given an outward light, &c. God's justice also doth in some manner persuade the same: doth not every good governor take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws? doth he not propound fit encouragements to obedience; and deter them from disobedience by menacing punishment? and the sovereign Governor and Judge of the world, can he fail sufficiently to declare his will? will he leave any apology for disobedience?

[c] Rom. i. 21; Eph. iv. 17. [d] 1 Cor. i. 21.

shall he neglect any means apt to promote his subjects' performance of their duty; fit to prevent the breach of his laws? If he loves righteousness, and desires to be duly obeyed, and delights in his subject's good, he will surely discover his mind, and encourage men to comply with it, and terrify them from opposing it. Indeed, that God should for a while connive at men's ignorance, and suffer them to grope after truth (as St. Paul expresseth it in the 14th and 17th of the Acts), to try them, as he did the Israelites in the wilderness, how they would behave themselves, in the using their talent of natural light;[e] to make them sensible of their natural infirmity; more ready to embrace; more able to value the redress vouchsafed them; to commend his extraordinary grace and mercy to them; that for such purposes, unsearchable wholly by our shallow understanding, he should, I say, for some time forbear with a full evidence to declare all his mind, is not so strange or unlikely. I might add, that it is not likely God should suffer the world (his kingdom) perpetually to lie under the usurpation and tyranny of the devil (*καταδυναστεύεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου*, Acts x. 38.) That his imperial throne should be possessed; his authority usurped; his name insulted and triumphed over, as it were, by that arch-rebel, and capital enemy of his; but that he should for ever suffer men to abide in such depth of ignorance, such perplexity of doubt, such captivity under sin and misery, seems not probable; and much less can it seem improbable that he hath done it: it cannot, I say, seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom, or justice of God, that he should show them clearly what he requires of them to do; what good he intends for them; what way leads to their happiness; and how they should avoid misery.[f] This consideration, though it doth not fully prove God hath made such revelation (for we cannot reach the utmost of possibilities, nor are judges of what God must needs do), yet it removes all obstruction to our belief, and disposes us to admit the following reasons: it being not unprobable, yea, in the reason of the thing, very probable, he should do it; we cannot wonder, and have less reason to distrust those arguments by which it may appear that he hath done it.

2. We may consider, that no other religion, that hath been, or now is, could (or can) with any probability pretend thus to have proceded from God, or by him to have been designed for the general, complete, and perpetual instruction and obligation of mankind. There have been but three pretensions thereto; that of Paganism, of Mahometanism, and of Judaism: let us a little examine each of them.

As for Paganism, it was never one simple or certain, one fixed or constant thing; but, according to difference of place and time, infinitely various and mutable: diversely shaped and modelled, according to fancy and humour, design or interest, of the state that allowed it, the priests that managed it, or the people that received it; a plain sign that (excepting some general confused notions, derived from ancient tradition) it did wholly proceed from human device, or some worse cause. Survey it all, and what shall you find, but a company of idle, ridiculous, ill-contrived, incredible, and inconsistent stories, arguing nothing of truth, and little of wit in them that invented them; these attended by practices most fond, lewd, and cruel, unworthy of human nature, contrary to common sense and honesty. Their worship directed to objects most improper: to the souls of dead men (men famous for nothing so much as the vicious enormities of their lives, bloody cruelties, thefts, and rapines; murders and parricides; horrid lusts, adulteries, rapes, and incests; and such persons, alive or dead, what good or wise man would not rather detest and abominate, than respect or worship?) To brute beasts, and them the most vile and mischievous (dogs, serpents, crocodiles;) which to pay devotion unto, what a debasement is it of human nature! To creatures inanimate; the stars and elements; rivers, trees, &c.; which we see acting by a natural necessity; yielding no signification of any life, sense, or understanding in them, and consequently much inferior to us in dignity of nature; which therefore it is a sottish baseness

[e] Acts xvii. 27, 30; xiv. 16.

[f] *Vide* discursum Quintii Ciceronis in i, de Divin.

in us to adore: yea, which is yet an extremer degree (if it may be) of folly, they dedicated temples and offered sacrifices to things void of all subsistence; to mere qualities and accidents of things; the passions of our minds, and the diseases of our body, and accidents of our lives: who would think men should be so mad as to reckon impudence (that odious vice), or a fever (that tormenting disease), or fortune (that which we can so little trust, and so oft complain of), among things venerable? and from such thorns, what fruits of good life and morality can we hope should spring? what piety towards God; what justice, truth, or goodness towards men; what sobriety or purity in men themselves can we expect should arise from such conceits and such practices in religion? none other, than such as St. Paul describes in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and in the second of the Epistle to the Ephesians; which history and experience show to have been no slanderous imputations upon Gentilism. But it is needless to discourse against that, which I suppose hath no reasonable patron; and which hardly any wise man, when it was practised, did seriously think had any truth or reality in it: Plato often inveighs against the inventors of those fictions in heathen theology: Aristotle attributes the constitution of those religions to the policy of lawgivers: there was no philosopher who did not signify his dislike or contempt of the vulgar opinions; that is, of their religion.[g] What Tully saith of one part, the wiser sort of men did judge of all: *Tota res est inventa fallaciis aut ad quæstum, aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem:* the whole business was deceitfully forged, either for gain, or out of superstition, or from mistake.

They did in their external carriage comply with common practice, out of politic discretion; for their safety, and for peace sake: but in their mind they believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it: they observed the common things, *tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam diis grata* (as commanded by the laws, not as acceptable to the gods), as Seneca speaks.[h]

I might add, that all these religions did vanish with the countenance of authority and power that sustained them; which shows they had no root in the hearty belief or approbation of those that professed them. It is therefore plain that this religion did not proceed from God; but either ftom human device or diabolical suggestion.

As for Mahometanism, a sect in later times sprung up and vastly spread about the world; neither can that fairly pretend to a divine original: in times of great disturbance and confusion in the world (when even among Christians ignorance and dissension, superstition and viciousness of manners had hugely prevailed), in a very blind corner of the earth, among a crew of barbarous thieves and wild runagates (such have those Arabians been always famed to be), this sect did first arise; being accommodated to the genius of such people, and infused into them, partly by juggling pretences to wonder-working and prophecy, partly by seditious violence; by a person not, as their own legends describe him, of any honourable qualities; but having all the characters of an impostor (rebellious and perfidious, inhuman and cruel, lewd and lascivious;) propagated it was afterwards by rage and terror of arms, and grew wholly among barbarous people, void of learning and civility; having no religion before, and therefore (as all mankind is naturally receptive of religious impressions) capable to admit any, especially such an one as this, agreeable to their savage humours and lusts; it subsists upon the same grounds of ignorance and force, refusing all examination, and upon extreme penalties prohibiting any dispute or controversy about its truth; being so far wise, as conscious to itself, that the letting in a little light, and a moderate liberty of discussing its pretences, would easily overthrow it. Even these exterior circumstances of its rise, growth, and continuance (so full of iniquity and inhumanity), are great presumptions against its divinity, or rather plainly demonstrate that it did not proceed from God; whose

[g] Arist. Metaph. xii. 8; Exampl. Cic. de Div. ii. pag. 240; Tusc. Qu. i. p. 301; De Div. ii. pag. 245.

[h] *Vide* August. de Civ. Dei, lib. iv. 33; vi. 10.

truth cannot need such courses, whose goodness abhors them: and if we look into it, we shall find it to be a lump of absurd opinions, odd stories, and uncouth ceremonies, compounded chiefly of the dregs of Christian heresies, with some ingredients of Judaism and Paganism, confusedly jumbled and tempered together: from Christian heresies it hath its negative doctrines, opposite to Christianity; for allowing Christ much respect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and his having really suffered; it rejects his true story, and affixes false ones upon him; that God hath a body and a human shape (Mahomet felt his hand forsooth, and it was very cold), an opinion so unreasonable and misbeseeming God, he might draw from the Anthropomorphites; and from the Manichees the doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events; a doctrine so prejudicial to religion, taking away those foundations of justice between God and man; man's free choice in serving God, and God's free disposal of rewards to men, suitable to their actions. The Jew contributed his ceremonies of circumcision, and purgations by washing; his abstinence from swine's flesh; his allowance of polygamy and divorce. I might add, that from him it borrowed its inhuman condemning, despising, and hating all the world; calling all men dogs (beside themselves), and adjuring all to certain damnation; affirming withal, that all of their belief, how wickedly soever they have lived, shall at length partake of salvation. The pagan elysium might be a pattern whence their paradise of corporeal delight and brutish sensuality might be transcribed; which any man sees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward to virtue; yea, how much it rather detracts from and discourages all performances of honesty and reason. He must be very stupid, who can suffer himself to be persuaded that these conceits did come from the God of holiness and wisdom. And how Mahomet was inspired with truth, his stories alone would evince; stories patched out of old histories corrupted, mutilated, and transplaced, interlarded with fabulous legends; contrary to all probable records of history (the persons, places, times, and all circumstances of which it most unskilfully confounds), yea, repugnant to the nature of things, and to all imaginable possibility; evident arguments both of an ignorant and impudent impostor: he that will lie or blunder about matters of fact, who can trust him in matters of right and reason? All which (if time would permit, and it were worth the while) might by manifold instances be showed. I might add its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue. But what is said doth enough declare this religion to be of no divine extraction.

As for ancient Judaism; that it has no such revelation as that we require, and did in the former conclusion assert (nor has any probability to expect an universal, complete, standing revelation), upon many scores may appear.[i] It is from the tenor thereof evident, that it was designed only for one small nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth; purposely distinguished, and, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind; and in effect so remaining for many ages (until the Roman conquests opened the world and discovered them) in a solitary obscurity; so that the most inquisitive surveyors of the earth, and searchers into the customs of people (Herodotus, for instance, and others), could not discern them, did take no notice of them; though for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable. *He showed* (saith the Psalmist) *his word unto Jacob, his statutes and judgments unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them.*[k] *I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine* (saith God to the Jews, Levit. xx. 26;) and, *So shall we be separated* (saith Moses in his address to God, Exod. xxxiii. 16:) *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth: Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth:*[l] and for this very purpose (of distinction and separation) many of their laws were

[i] *Vide* Psal. lxxviii. 5; lxxvi. 1; Deut. iv. 7, &c.
[k] Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.
[l] Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2.

appointed: *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people: ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean,*[m] &c. We see the laws of that religion particularly directed to that people: *Hear, O Israel*, being the usual compellation, set in the head of them: and, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, is the introduction to the very Decalogue itself:[n] the encouragements also to, and discouragements from, obedience, do peculiarly appertain to them; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the land of Canaan, if they did obey; and dispossession or affliction therein, if they should presume to disobey: *You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye possess.*[o] Such were the promises exciting to obedience; and the threatenings to disobedience suitable; as everywhere in their law and story is visible.

This revelation, therefore, cannot be deemed general, such as we argued in reason might be expected from him who, as the Psalmist sings, *is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works;*[p] who *hath made of one blood πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, the whole nation of mankind*, as St. Paul in the Acts expresseth it;[q] who, as St. Peter there implies, *is no respecter of persons*, or of nations; *who is the Maker and Saviour of all men*, and, as the Wise Man tells us, *careth for all alike;* being desirous that *all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth;* not willing *that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance;*[r] who is not φιλεβραῖος only, or φιλέλην (a lover of Jews only, or Greeks), but φιλάνθρωπος, a lover of men, and φιλόψυχος, a lover of souls; who, lastly, *is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also:* as not our prophets and apostles only tell us, but the reason of the thing, and the voice of nature, doth declare.[s]

And as this revelation was particular, so was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his mind to all, so neither did he in it speak out all his mind. Surveying this religion, may we not easily descry a great redundance in the circumstantial and exterior parts; a great defect in the substantials and inwards thereof? Ritual institutions innumerable we see, nicely described, and strongly pressed; moral precepts more sparingly delivered, not so clearly explained, nor so fully urged by rational inducements: observation of times and places; distinction of meats and habits; corporal cleansings and purgations; modalities of outward service in sacrifices and oblations, those δικαιώματα σαρκὸς (Heb. ix. 9, 10), justifications of the flesh, that could not perfect the observer's conscience (or mind, or inward man;) *touch not, taste not, handle not*, most largely and with extreme punctuality, some of them under heavy penalties (excision and extermination), enjoined;[t] while moral duties and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and more pleasing to God) seem not so perfectly provided for. Many things are tacitly connived at, or plainly permitted to them (as polygamy, divorce, some kind of revenge and uncharitableness,) which even natural reason dislikes or condemns: God's placability and aptness to forgive great sins, wilfully and presumptuously committed (such as no man lives altogether free from), not openly revealed, but rather the contrary expressed (*Cursed is he that abides not in all things written in this law to do them:*[u]) which excludes all assurance, and discourages from hope of mercy; and consequently obstructs repentance and amendment of life. And where do we see any clear discovery concerning the immortality of the soul, or the future state, so material a point of religion, of so great moment to encourage virtue and piety? Even the Gentile theology seems more express in this point, than the Jewish law;[v] and the pagan

[m] Levit. xx. 24, 25.
[n] Deut. iv. 1; v. 1; vi. 3, &c.; Exod. xx.
[o] Deut. v. 33; *vide* Deut. vi. 3, &c.
[p] Psal. cxlv. 9. [q] Acts xvii. 26.
[r] Acts x. 34; 1 Tim. iv. 10; ii. 4; Wisd. vi. 7; xi. 23, &c.; 2 Pet. iii. 9; Tit. iii. 4; Wisd. xi. 26; *vide* Ezek. xviii.

[s] Rom. iii. 29.—οὐδεὶς θεὸς δύανους ἀνθρώποις.—Plat. Theæt. [t] Col. ii. 21.
[u] Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10.
[v] *Vide* Ezek. xx. 25.

priests (by help of ancient tradition) seem to have reached further than the Hebrew prophets: God indeed seems to have showed only his back parts to Moses; when he discovered no more of his nature and his pleasure to him: when he seems to delight in, and lay so much stress upon, those carnal and ceremonious performances. Neither do we herein charge God; for he did herein but what wisdom required; the laws and institutions of this religion were surely accommodated to the state and disposition and capacity of that people; people not very wise or considerate, grave or constant, meek or flexible; but a very stubborn, froward, humorous generation of men, as their own writings describe them; and therefore not capable of perfect instruction or rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and unruliness of passion, not οἰλεῖοι ἀκρόαται (no proper auditors), or a pure and accurate discipline; and as with such God in his wisdom and tender goodness seems to have dealt with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, and condescending to their mean capacities; feeding them with milk, and indulging them in innocent trifles; and so tempering his ordinances given unto them, as might best serve partly to please and humour them, partly to curb and restrain them:[v] whence St. Paul calls them *poor and weak elements*, and *elements of the world*,[x] (such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn), adapted to the learning and practising of children;* the Law being a schoolmaster, to keep them in order, and prepare them for a higher instruction. Such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish fancies, and content slavish spirits; but to men improved in reason, who could relish spiritual entertainments, they must needs seem burdensome and tedious: wise men cannot be much affected with pomps and solemnities. In the practice of virtue and piety there are alluring sweetnesses and beauties, which it must needs displease him that is sensible of them, to be evoked from, by an obligation to attend precisely to such an abundance of outward sapless observances; to be bound to chew such husks, neglecting so delicious a kernel, cannot but be irksome and grievous: they are therefore styled well in the New Testament an intolerable *yoke and burden* (Acts xv. 10, 28), and to be freed of them is a very valuable privilege, which Christ hath purchased for us (Gal. v. 1.) It is true, by degrees God imparted further manifestations of light even to that people, by the examples and instructions of holy men and prophets sent among them, in a manner and upon occasions extraordinary: holy men by their practice showed that the rigour of the law might in some cases be relaxed and dispensed with; that a more spiritual service was acceptable to God; that he loved a purer devotion and a higher charity than the Law required. And the prophets often declared, that God did not so much delight in ceremonious observances; but cheifly did require hearty piety, perfect justice, and tender charity; accompanied with meekness and patience, temperance and sobriety. By them also God discovered more of his gracious disposition and merciful intentions; that he could pardon the greatest sins, and was reconcilable to the most heinous offenders, upon sincere repentance and amendment of life. But these arbitary and extraordinary dipensations of further light and instruction to the Jews do confirm our purpose, showing that God did not primarily intend the Jewish law for a complete discovery of his mind; having reserved so much to be discovered in fit opportunity, argues, that more still might be behind; as indeed we see that future life and immortality was not even by the prophets quite brought to light; that better covenant, established upon better promises, was not yet revealed.[y]

Yea, this religion, as it was not universal and complete, so neither was it immutable and perpetual: itself tell us, that God hereafter would raise another Prophet (for extraordinariness and eminency like to Moses), which should have words by God put into his mouth (new words, surely, new revelations from God), whom they particularly should be obliged to hear and obey:[z] that that *the days should come, when the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel*, dif-

* Νήπιοι.

[v] *Vide* Orig. adv. Cels. lib. iii. Gr. v. 6.

[x] Gal. iv. 9; iv. 3; iii. 24.

[y] Heb. viii. 6.

[z] Deut. xviii. 15.

ferent from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt;[a] not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon men's hearts: concerning which we may say with the author to the Hebrews, *If the first had been ἄμεμπτος, faultless* and *perfect, there would have no place been found for the second:* and, *By speaking of a new one, he antiquated the old one.*[b]

That another priesthood should infallibly be established, not after the order of Aaron, but *after the order of Melchizedek;* (not to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions.[c])

That time should be, when God would *gather all nations and tongues; and they should come and see his glory*[d] and out of them God would *take* (that which the Mosaical constitution would not permit) *of them for priests and for Levites.*

That there should be a Zion, a mountain seated above all mountains, wherein God would place his perpetual residence (his seat of worship and goverment), to which all nations should flow, to learn God's will and walk in his ways.[e] (Which could not be Jerusalem, which is long since desolated; and which, if standing, could be no convenient resort for all the world; it is another spiritual Zion, a mystical rock is surely prophesied of.)

That God will *create a new heaven and a new earth* (a wholly new world and state of things;) *so that the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind.*[f]

That God would pour his spirit of prophecy upon all flesh (though the prophetical spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation;) that *the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*[g] (Judaism cannot be this knowledge, which was never likely to fill the earth.) That *from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, God's name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto his name, and a pure offering.*[h] (In every place incense shall be offered unto God, not only at Jerusalan, to which the Jewish service was confined.) For that a time was determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy; and to anoint the most holy:[i] that is, in fine, that God would send the Messias, to enlighten the world with a perfect instruction; revealing God's will, and declaring his mercy to mankind; to erect an universal spiritual kingdom over men's hearts, reducing them to the knowledge and obedience of God: these things (to which I might add divers more) sufficiently show that the Mosaical dispensation was but temporal and changeable; and that that was intended by God to be done, which the author of the Hebrews affirms done by Christ:[j] an abrogation is made of the precedent command, for its weakness and unprofitableness (its unprofitableness to the purposes of bringing men to such a spiritual sanctity which would please God;*) which is another consideration that shows the imperfection of the Jewish religion. If Judaism could not dispose men to any tolerable degree of piety and righteousness acceptable to God (that which St. Paul so largely proves in the Epistle to the Romans), if it also tenders no favour or pardon to those which had transgressed the law and offended God[k]) (which he also there and otherwhere shows), it was necessary, that either all men should lie under a desperate slavery to sin and guilt, or that God should discover another way of righteousness and mercy to be obtained.[l]

That the Christian doctrine did proceed from God, is a principle upon which our faith of all particular articles in our Creed doth rely; the truth and reasonableness of which I began to show; proceeding by some steps; whereof the first was, the probability that God should reveal such a doctrine for the benefit and direction of mankind; the second, that no other religion can pretend to such a revelation: these assertions do well prepare our way to a third (which now we proceed to), that I might further consider how unsuitable the Jewish religion was to the common nature and genius of

[a] Jer. xxxi. 31. [b] Heb. viii. 7, 13.
[c] Psal. cx. 4. [d] Isa. lxvi. 18, 21.
[e] Psal. cxxxii. 13; Mic. iv. 1, 2, &c.; Joel ii. 28; iii. 26.
[f] Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22.
[g] Joel ii. 28; Hab. ii. 14. [h] Mal. i. 11.

* Διὰ τὸ ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές.
[i] Dan. ix. 24.
[j] Heb. vii. 18. [k] Rom. iii.
[l] Gal. iii. &c.

mankind: and therefore unapt to prevail upon men's minds: *Judæorum mos absurdus, sordidusque* (the Jewish way of religion is uncouth and sordid), was Tacitus's censure;[m] but it agreed to the general conceit of men about it, at that time when it began to be commonly known and observed: and a religion so little plausible or probable (so apt to be disliked and despised), it is not likely that God would commend to the generality of mankind. But I will not further insist upon this argument: but proceed to assert,

3dly, That the Christian doctrine is in all respects such as might become God to be the author of; worthy his wisdom and goodness to reveal and impose upon mankind. We cannot imagine a better, more clearly true, more full and exact; more satisfactory to our minds and to our wants: we have therein the nature and will of God plainly declared, so far as it is fit and useful for us to know them; together with our relations to him, and all the state of our own souls: an exact rule of life prescribed to us, with all fit helps and proper encouragements to the performance of our duty; the way of obtaining all the happiness we are capable of, and avoiding all misery, clearly set before us; all the darkness removed, the doubts resolved, the mistakes corrected, with which mankind, in those matters of highest concernment, hath been hitherto disturbed and distracted. It assigns, I say, a true and lively character of God; true, because worthy of him; agreeable to whatever reason dictates, and the works of nature show concerning him; ascribing all conceivable perfections to him in the highest degree, and asserting all his due rights and prerogatives; omniscient wisdom and almighty power; infinite benignity and beneficency toward his creatures; supreme majesty and authority over all; having made all things with especial regard to man; and upholding them with the same gracious respect; and governing them with a particular care and providence; searching all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to a general (and ultimate) good end: this is the first excellency of our religion, which is great, both as to the object and influence thereof. The ignorance of God's nature, or misconceptions about him, what mischief and what superstitions do they not produce in the worship of God! Christian religion represents him in his essence one, perfectly simple, spiritual, omnipresent, eternal, impassible, and immutable; self-sufficient and infinitely happy: in his interior disposition of will, and in all his purposes, absolutely free, pure, and holy; just, faithful, and constant: in all his dealings with rational creatures, as very careful and tender of their good; exceedingly gracious and merciful toward them; so in nowise fond or indulgent, but impartially just and severe against all iniquity obstinately pursued and persisted in; most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his proceedings: it represents him compassionate of our evils; placable for our offences; accessible, and inclinable to help us in our needs. Thus but with advantage beyond what I can express, it describes God to us, mixing nothing unworthy or misbecoming him (as other religions and doctrines may be observed to do;) adding nothing repugnant to what natural light discerns or approves, but showing something beside and beyond what it can discover; concerning his incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence; his unsearchable counsels of wisdom; his admirable ways of providence; whereby he hath designed to commend his goodness and glorify his justice to us: which kind of truths (exceeding the reach of human invention and capacity), as it becomes God (so far transcending us in wisdom and knowledge) to reveal them, so they, so wonderfully suiting to the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us, do argue the divinity of the doctrine that acquaints us with them. That God should send his Son out of his bosom, to partake our nature, and appear in our flesh; to manifest his will unto us; to set before us an exact pattern of holy life (the most difficult parts especially thereof, humility and patience;) by his obedience and suffering to expiate our sin and reconcile God to mankind, is a mystery indeed, and depth of goodness, which our reason cannot fathom, which we can better admire than understand: but neither can any reason contradict or disprove it: nothing can be incredible to

[m] Hist. v. 5.

us concerning that immense goodness, whose common care of us, even in matters of ordinary providence, is so wonderful and unaccountable, that the consideration thereof made Job and the Psalmist thus exclaim: *What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him?* (Job vii. 17.) *Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!* (Psal. cxliv. 3; viii. 4.)

2. This doctrine also informs us concerning ourselves, and the state of our souls; concerning the nobleness of our extraction and the dignity of our nature, derived from God and resembling him; how we fell from our original felicity, and lapsed into this wretched blindness, error, and disorder of soul, into this state of frailty, sorrow, and misery, by our distrust and disobedience to God; how being thus estranged from God, and exposed to his wrathful displeasure, we may recover again his love and favour, and may, by returning to God and complying with his will, be reinstated in a happy condition, more happy far than that from which we fell; that our souls are immortal (a point which the wisest men have so much disputed about, and doubted of; and in the certain decision of which they would have been so much satisfied), and what its state shall be after its separation from this body, suited to its demeanour and demerits in this life; what a judgment and trial all our actions (even our most secret thoughts and words) must undergo after this life: these so important truths, so useful for the satisfaction of our minds and the direction of our lives, so conducible to the clearing of our notions, even concerning nature and the course of things in this world, this doctrine plainly shows us: and is it not in that respect worthy to come from God, who alone could teach and satisfy us in these things?

3. As for that rule of life it prescribes us, nothing can be more exactly agreeable to our reason, more perfective of our nature, more conducible either to the public good, or to our private content. What can be more just and reasonable, than all those duties of piety which it requires; than highest esteem and honour of him which is most excellent; most hearty love and affection to him, who is in himself most good, toward us most beneficent; most awful fear of him, who is so powerful, so pure, so just and severe; gratitude to him from whom we have received our being, and all our good things; trust and hope in him, who can do what he will, and will do whatever he hath promised, and whatever in reason we can expect from his goodness; all obedience and observance of him, whose children and servants and subjects we are born? Can there be a greater privilege, than liberty of access to him in our needs, who is alone able to supply them? Can we desire upon easier terms to receive benefits, than by acknowledging our wants and asking for them? Is there a more equal or favourable kind of satisfaction for our offences, than confession, and repenting of them? Is it not fit we should endeavour to promote his glory, who hath been so careful of ours? The practice of such a piety cannot but produce excellent fruits, a joyful peace of conscience, a comfortable hope, a freedom from all superstitious terrors and affrightments; and therefore is not our obligation to these duties most reasonable? And for our behaviour toward each other, what better directions can we have, than those which our gospel affords us: that we cordially love one another, earnestly desire each other's good, pity all the evils of our brethren, be ready to afford them all the help and comfort we can, not limiting this our charity, but extending it to all, in imitation of God's boundless beneficence; that we should mutually bear infirmities, and pardon all injuries done us, not rendering evil for evil, but requiting evil with good;[a] that we be just and honest in all our dealings, observant of all duties concerning our relations, diligent in our callings, peaceable and quiet in our stations, respective and obedient to our superiors, meek and gentle and courteous in our behaviour toward all men, rooting out all malice, wrath, envy, strife, animosity, ill suspicion, out of our hearts, forbearing to revile, slander, detract, or rashly to censure any man. Now, what great benefits is it not evident that the practice of such duties would bring forth! what mischiefs would it prevent! How sociable, and pleasant, and secure a life, should we lead therein! What innumerable griefs and

[a] Gal. vi. 10; Matt. vi. 44.

troubles, fears and suspicions, discomposures and distractions of mind at home; what dangers, tumults, confusions, and tragedies abroad, would it remove! This part, therefore, of our rule plainly deserves the impression of divine authority upon it. As for the precepts concerning the management of ourselves, our own souls and bodies; those which oblige us to be humble and modest, calm and serene, contented and patient, pure and chaste, sober and temperate, banishing all haughty conceits and vain opinions concerning ourselves,[o] regulating our passions and restraining our appetites, moderating ourselves in all corporeal enjoyments, possessing our vessels in sanctity and honour, abstaining from all unlawful and irregular pleasures (base in kind or excessive in degree), which may corrupt our minds, or impair our healths, or disturb our quiet: it prohibits us not the use of any creature whence we may receive any profit or delight, but indulges us a prudent and sober enjoyment of them all, with sense of God's goodness and thankfulness (1 Tim. iv. 4.) And who sees not what benefit and convenience doth accrue to us from obeying such commands? In few words, *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are decent, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue or any praise*, those things the Christian doctrine enjoins us to regard and practice.[p] And what other religion, I pray, or what philosophy, hath so perfectly and clearly, with such consistence and with such confidence, taught us the like? If any have taught us some of them (as it is no wonder if they should, since all of them are so plainly agreeable to good reason), yet could none press them with such effectual inducements, nor enforce the practice of them upon so true and necessary grounds. Some philosophies have highly commended virtue, and vehemently exhorted thereto; but the ends are mean which they aim at, the grounds very weak from which they argue: present satisfaction and tranquillity of mind, safety, quiet, convenience, and pleasure of this life; can they persuade men easily that these are sufficient inducements so carefully and painfully to follow virtue? Doth that thing deserve such mighty elogies, which hath no greater rewards or benefits than those attending it? No, surely. He that tells us, by doing these things we shall imitate the highest goodness, we shall honour God and please him, we shall perform a duty of gratitude to our great Benefactor, we shall obtain the love and favour of God, we shall avoid his wrath and displeasure, we shall acquire not only comfort and peace of conscience here, but an everlasting crown of joy and bliss hereafter; he propoundeth ends infinitely more noble, he useth arguments incomparably most efficacious and persuasive to the practice of virtue. No philosophy in any measure represents virtue so truly upon all accounts estimable and eligible as this; none can discover the excellent fruits that grow upon it.

4. Neither doth this religion only teach and persuade us to so excellent a way of life, but (what no other law or doctrine pretends to) it shows us the means, it affordeth us help and ability to practise it; (without which, such is the frailty of our nature, experience shows that all instruction or exhortation whatever would signify little;) it is no dead letter, but hath a quickening spirit accompanying it; it sounds not only through the ear, but impresses itself upon the heart: if our mind be doubtful or dark, it directs us to a sure oracle, where we may receive certain counsel and information: if our passions be turbulent, and our appetites outrageous; if temptation overbear us, it leadeth us thither, whence we may procure strength to resist and subdue them. This doctrine, lastly, fully satisfies us about that inquiry which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much final irresolution hath exercised philosophers, wherein man's happiness consists, and what the means are to attain to it: that it doth not consist in any one of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all; but in the favour of God, and enjoyment of him, and in the blessings flowing thence; which happiness only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's commandments, a practice of that virtue and piety (in most part before specified), is obtainable. Such is the tenor of the Christian doctrine: these things it discovers and teaches, not with fine methods

[o] 1 Thess. iv. 4. [p] Phil. iv. 8.

of artificial eloquence and subtilty, πειθοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, the persuasive words of human wisdom, but with a majestic simplicity, confidence, and authority, with demonstration of spirit and power; such as becomes the sovereign Lord to use, when he vouchsafes to declare his mind.[q] I should have interposed this very material observation, that Christianity requires chiefly, and in a manner only, a rational and spiritual service, not clogged with multitude of external rites and observances (those few it enjoins are plainly most reasonable, very decent and useful, fit to instruct us in and excite us to our duty;) which shows that this revelation is complete, suitable to the most adult age, the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But I must leave this point: and, I think, thus much may suffice to show, that a doctrine so beneficial and satisfactory to mankind, so exceedingly beautiful and amiable, so agreeable to reason, and yet so much surpassing it, may well be supposed to have proceeded from divine authority and revelation: *Non vox hominem sonat;* the true tone and air of it sounds above the voice of man; its looks so much resemble the divine wisdom and goodness, one cannot think it had any other parent.

To these abstracted considerations I add (which is the last step of our discourse),

Lastly, that *de facto*, in very deed, God hath asserted and attested to the Christian doctrine. God is himself invisible and indiscernible to our senses; neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence: it must be therefore by works supernatural and extraordinary (such as no creature can effect or counterfeit) that he must (if ever assuredly) signify his mind and purpose to us: and of such there is no kind of attestation needful or (perhaps) possible, which God hath not afforded to this doctrine. He had by many several prophecies, in different times, long before presignified, that he would make such a revelation to mankind, to be dispensed by a person extraordinarily qualified, and especially to be favoured by himself, whom therefore the Jewish nation did with much desire expect; to which prophecy, as no other hath appeared that can pretend to agree, so this is very congruous. And this is one way most proper to God of attesting his mind; because it cannot be anywise counterfeited, it being only in God's power to foretell such future events. Another way is by express voices and apparitions from heaven; and by these God declared the same at several fit seasons:[r] to St. John the Baptist (that most just and holy person, so taken and acknowledged by all, even by his enemies that murdered him), when Jesus was baptized; to St. Peter, and St. John, and St. James, three most credible witnesses, if any can be, concerning matter of fact;[s] and again, before the multitude, a little before his death; to St. Paul, a person also in all respects credible, and in most remarkable circumstances:[t] and such attestations as these it is not likely God would suffer to be given to falsehood or imposture: if any creature should be so daring as to endeavour it, we cannot reasonably deem that God would permit his name and authority (in so direct a manner) to be abused.

3. But further, to thwart the course of nature, and act against its established laws, can only belong to him who is Lord of nature, who made it, and upholds it, and governs it by a perpetual decree:[u] and this, in favour and countenance to this doctrine, hath God performed, not once, but often, in many places, through a long course of time, in several ways, by many instruments, most openly and visibly.[v] Numerous were such supernatural works performed by the principal author of this doctrine, our Lord himself; many of them so public and palpable, that they convinced many of the spectators; and them not only indifferent and ingenuous people, but those who were most unwilling to be convinced, and ashamed or afraid to acknowledge their conviction: *Many* (saith St. John) *believed on him, beholding the miracles that he did.*[w] Nicodemus came secretly to him, and confessed thus: *We know that thou hast come a teacher from God: for*

[q] 1 Cor. ii. 4; 2 Pet. i. 16.—σεσοφισμένοι μῦθοι.

[r] Matt. iii; xvii. 5, &c.; Luke ix.

[s] 2 Pet. i. 16, &c.

[t] John xii. 28.

[u] Jer. v. 22.

[v] Heb. ii. 4; Ὅσα, John x. 41.

[w] John ii. 23.

no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.[x] Again it is said, *Many of the people believed in him, saying, When Christ comes, will he do more miracles than this man hath done?*[y] Also of the rulers, *many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.*[z] *What shall we do?* saith the chief priests and Pharisees; *for this man doth many wonders. If we thus let him alone, all men will believe on him.*[a] St. Peter thus confidently appeals to the Jewish nation: *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved* (or demonstrated) *by* (or from) *God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you yourselves know.*[b] So notorious were many of our Saviour's miracles, that his worst adversaries could not but acknowledge them: and of these the most signal, his resurrection, was such, that no evasion seems devisable to withstand either its truth as to the fact, or its force to confirm our purpose (that God did attest to this doctrine;) by it indeed God did, as St. Paul speaks, πίστιν παρέχειν πᾶσι, yield an argument most persuasive to all, that what our Saviour taught (particularly concerning the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, and the judgment to come) is most certainly true.[c] That our Saviour really died, all the world could testify (no death was ever more solemn or remarkable;) that he rose again, was attested, not by one or two, but by many persons (those most familiarly acquainted with him), who did not see him once, in passing, at a distance, but often, for a good time (forty days together), conversed with him (above five hundred of such persons at once did see him, as St. Paul tells us;[d]) so that they could not be deceived themselves therein, being αὐτόπται, and ἀκριβοῦν τοῦ λόγου, perfectly informed concerning the matter as eyes and ears could make them:[e] *not having followed cunningly devised fables, did we acquaint you with the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ;*[f] but being ἐπόπται τῆς ἐκείνου μεγαλειότητος, *having a full view of his majesty:* and, *What we heard ourselves, what we did see with our eyes, what our hands did feel, of the Word of life:*[g] such, as to their ability of testifying the truth, was these men's testimony: and concerning the fidelity and honesty of these witnesses, that they should not either in this case (or concerning other actions of Christ which they attested to) wilfully deceive others, there be presumptions as great as can be. They were men that preached all goodness and sincerity to others, and in other things irreprovably practised them: they could have no design imaginable upon any profit, or honour, or advantage whatever to themselves (they refused all; they willingly underwent all afflictions and disgraces for the sake of this very testimony; bearing the cross was the *officum* they pretended to undertake, and the *beneficium* too they did promise themselves to enjoy in this world.) Peace of conscience, and hope of future reward, was plainly all the support they had; neither of which they could have enjoyed or expected in the maintenance of a lie; persecution from men, and damnation from God, they must be sure of, if conscious of so villainous a design, to abuse the world with a tale: neither were they downright madmen or fools (as they must have been, if they could have believed themselves, or thought to persuade others, such stories, had they been false;) their excellent writings show the contrary, and the prodigious efficacy their endeavours found: so unanimous a consent, so clear a confidence, so firm resolution, so invincible constancy and patience, nothing but truth itself and a good conscience could inspire men with. It is possible, in matter of speculation and subtilty, men upon weak grounds might be desperately pertinacious; but in matter of fact to be so, none in such circumstances and to such purposes could be so basely stupid; no such men surely. No matter of fact ever had, nor could have in any respect, a stronger attestation: to doubt or distrust it, were to invalidate all proof by testimony (upon which yet all administration of justice, all commerce

[x] John iii. 2.
[y] John vii. 31.
[z] John xii. 42.
[a] John xi. 47.
[b] Acts ii. 22.
[c] Acts xvii. 31; Rom. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 3.
[d] *Vide* Acts xiii. 31, &c.; i.
[e] 1 Cor. xv. 6; Matt. xxviii. 7; Luke i. 2.
[f] 2 Pet. i. 16.
[g] 1 John i. 1.

and transaction of human affairs, doth in a manner subsist and depend;) it were to embrace the vanity of the most impudently pertinacious sceptics: and admitting the truth of their testimony (as if we be reasonable and ingenuous we must), to believe that God should do such works, or should permit them to be done (should lend his sovereign power and interpose an extraordinary hand), for procuring credit to a falsehood; that he should so far contribute to men's delusion in matters of this nature, concerning his own honour and men's salvation, is a conceit as blasphemous and dishonourable to God, as derogatory to his attributes of wisdom, justice, and goodness, as can be. This kind of attestation did God yield, not only to the person of our Lord, but to his disciples and followers for a long time after, as by the same authentic testimonies doth appear; yea it continued for some ages, so long as any such extraordinary means were needful or convenient for conviction of the world; as by many express passages in Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Origen, Cyprian, and other ancient writers, might be showed. I shall only add one kind of divine confirmation more, which was that of an extraordinary providence attending this doctrine in the conveyance and propagation thereof; that by the ministry of a few mean, poor, unlearned, and simple men, without any outward circumstances commending them to men's regard; without any assistance of power, any subtilty of wit, any trains of policy, any eloquence of speech, any external advantage discernible; yea against all these, against the utmost endeavours of all the force in the world, all politic devices, all cruel persecutions; against all prejudices of education, public law, inveterate custom; against most subtle and eloquent adversaries, it should in a short time so vastly prevail, so that within a while all the power, and wit, and eloquence of man did submit unto it and serve under it, is an argument that God did interpose his almighty hand: no less power could effect so unaccountable a change: it seems no less a miracle in matters of this nature (a moral or political miracle I may call it), than to blow up a great oak with one's breath, or remove a mountain with a word speaking, would be a miracle in nature.

I might adjoin, that this doctrine being so much directed against, so vigorously impugning, the domination and delusion of wicked spirits (being so prejudicial and destructive to the interest of hell), all the malice, wit, and power of the Devil we may presume employed against it; and such potent combinations of mundane and infernal force to withstand, subdue, and overthrow, cannot justly or reasonably be ascribed to any other power than that of heaven. The proceeding also in so meek and quiet a way, without any tumult or terror, not rudely forcing men's outward compliance, but sweetly drawing their hearts into the love and approbation of this doctrine, so different from the course of human proceeding, so becoming the divine goodness, doth well consent and confer to the efficacy of this discourse. But I cannot insist longer on these things; yet think I may well upon all these premises (though very slightly and cursorily handled) conclude, that the Christian doctrine did proceed from God.

I shall briefly touch the last principle; that there be proper and sufficient means by which we may discern the genuine doctrines and dictates of Christianity. Indeed if there were not such, our discourse hitherto used would be all vain, having no certain scope or subject; to no purpose had God dispensed a revelation for the direction and benefit of mankind, if he had not withal provided means of apprehending it with a competent certainty, such at least as might suffice to engage men honest and moderately wise upon the practice of all necessary duties prescribed; (for enough to satisfy cavilling spirits, that are possessed with prejudices, or proceed upon design, or delight in doubt and dispute, whose business and interest (or humour) it may be to confound things, did not need, perhaps could not be provided: there have been men that have questioned what the most evident reason, the most common sense and experience shows; and such sceptics, or such politics no means will serve to satisfy their minds, at least to stop their mouths, but) in reality there be several means, by God's wise providence afforded, whereby we may discern Christian

truth, some more convenient and secure, all in their kind proper and good. For transmitting to posterity any particular doctrine, no man can doubt but the most sure way is its being commended to writing by the authors and inventors thereof (those upon whose authority it doth rely:) as if Pythagoras, or Socrates, or Zeno, their writings, were extant, by them we should be best assured what their philosophies were: and no man will dispute whether that be genuine Peripateticism which is plainly read in the writings of Aristotle, the father of that sect; though even his unskilful expositors should mistake, or his prejudiced adversaries should pervert or calumniate his meaning. They that write are wont with most care and deliberation (and consequently with most perspicuity and exactness) to express their minds: and *litera scripta manet;* letters are subject to least variation: memories are frail, fancies are busy; but writings are easily preserved without considerable alteration. The next most sure way of conserving such doctrines, is the writings of the next disciples that immediately received them from the authors, or before they had passed through many hands, and commended them to writing: so what Socrates (for instance) did teach, the writings of Plato and Xenophon can with a very good degree of certainty acquaint us. The next is the writings of men (studious and learned in those matters) after larger distances of time; so as we may be informed concerning Stoicism by the writings of Cicero, of Epictetus, of Seneca: the which way is more imperfect, every writer being apt to misapprehend and misrepresent something; especially all affecting to do somewhat more than transcribe what they find in former authors, to comment and descant upon, to adorn and set out, to confirm or confute the doctrine they relate, in order thereto representing it with advantage to their purpose. The last way is by continued tradition, by oral instruction, successively from time to time; which is of all ways most liable to defect and corruption: for the teacher may unaptly express his meaning, and the hearer may not rightly understand him; the memory of both may in some material thing faulter. Men love to be curious in their speech, to vary in expression, to make explications, to draw consequences, to mix their own conceits and inventions, to show the acuteness of their wit and the fruitfulness of their fancy, to display all their faculties of ratiocination and eloquence: especially they are apt to accommodate doctrines to their own prejudices, inclinations and designs; whence error and difference may insensibly creep through this conduit; and the further such tradition departs from the original spring, the more subject it is to contract such alterations and impurities. Every doctrine thus propagated is like a stream; at the head it is small and narrow, clear and pure; proceeding on, it grows larger and fouler: so tradition swells, by taking in what oblique channels of private fancy and pragmatical invention discharge into it; and by receiving tincture from particular inclination or politic design, it grows muddy and feculent. We have all these ways afforded us; and for confirmation and distinction of our doctrine may use them all: in the principal doctrines (such as we mentioned) they all conspire; and therefore there can be no reason to doubt that they are pure and genuine: but in reason the best and surest means of knowing what our Saviour and his disciples taught, are the writings of his disciples (persons, besides their advantage of immediately learning from our Saviour's mouth, extraordinarily assisted by God in their ministries and instructions), of whose writings many have by God's good providence been preserved to our times, being such as no man hath reason to question that they came from them (no more than concerning the most undoubted writings of any author;) wherein they aim at nothing else but to declare the doctrine of Christianity, and inculcate the practice thereof, in the most simple, plain, and familiar manner, plainly agreeing with each other in the main drift and design of their discourses; so that we may justly presume that all important doctrines of Christianity are in them fully delivered, and that whatever we find in them perspicuously expressed we are obliged to take for such. To the same purposes we may use the writings of the Christians of the first ages, who with care committed to writing what they had learned from the mouths of the

apostles or their successors: for in so small distance of time it is not likely any considerable variation should intercur; neither would such men, living in times of persecution, and suffering for conscience sake, so free from all designs of avarice or ambition, be so ready to alter or adulterate the doctrine they received: and supposing the writings of the apostles were wanting, even theirs would yield us a competent knowledge of the Christian doctrine; neither, were their monuments also lost, should we be quite destitute of means, from the lowest and latest, whether writings or traditions of Christianity, to discover its principal and fundamental doctrines: for, discreetly paring off some excrescences, discernible enough to have proceeded from human invention, what sophistical curiosity hath introduced (nice positions and questions about the right application of terms of art), what politic design hath added (wherein some sorts of men are, we may plainly see, privately concerned), what plainly relishes of those ages wherein ignorance and superstitious dotage did so generally prevail, what is inconsistent with the most generally acknowledged principles of our religion; refining, I say, with some serious consideration, the pure ore from such dross, we may not difficultly perceive, even by the use of the most inferior means allowed us, what the true principles of Christianity are. But since God hath vouchsafed us so various helps, we may in their due order, according to our capacity, apply them all; comparing present traditions with ancient writings, and confirming what we learn from these by the supreme and unquestionable authority of holy scripture. But this argument the time will not permit me to prosecute distinctly, and as it deserves. These digressionary discourses (which yet I thought pertinent to the design of our business, declaring and confirming the grounds of our faith) being thus passed over, I shall hereafter closely pursue the explication of the Creed; in the mean while craving pardon from your patience, &c.

I believe in God the Father.

The appellation of *God* not improperly taken (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office they bear to the supreme God), but relating to him who only truly and properly is styled *God*, is sometimes put absolutely, sometimes hath a relative apposition going along with it. Being absolutely (or singly) put, it sometimes refers, by way of eminency, particularly to the first Person in the glorious Trinity; as when Christ is called *the Son of God;* and the Holy Ghost, *the Spirit of God;* and when God is put in distinction from the other Persons (when, for instance, it is said, *That they may know thee the only true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ; Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: The Word was with God: To serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven:* and in that form of blessing, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.*[h] But commonly it is to be understood for God essentially considered (according to that divine essence common to the three Persons;) to whom in that respect all the divine attributes agree, and from whom all divine operations (absolute and *ad extrà*) do jointly proceed. And to this sense or notion we have hitherto supposed that the name of *God* might here be applied: for that *there is one God*, having such essential attributes, is the first principle and foundation of all religion; which we must therefore suppose, if not directly expressed, yet at least sufficiently implied in the Creed. And supposing the word in part doth imply this sense, the attribute or title of *Father* doth in many respects truly and properly belong to God. Being a father denotes causality, sustenance, beneficence, governance; especially when these operations are attended with particular care and affection; in all which respects (severally considered, or jointly) God may fitly be styled *Father:* Father of all things being: Father of all intellectual beings especially: the Father particularly of all men; and, among men, chiefly of good men. He is the Father of all beings, as the maker and efficient

[h] *Vide* 1 Thess. i. 9, 10; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Eph. i. 3; iv. 6; John xvii. 3; 2 Cor. i. 3; 1 Pet. i. 3; John i. 1; 1 Thess. i. 9, 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

cause of them. So is he called in that famous sentence of Plato's Timæus: Τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ δὲ τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν:[i] That Maker and Father of this universe it is hard to find out; and, having found him, it is impossible to express him unto all men: and Πατέρα πάντων, St. Paul calls him *the Father of all things* (taking πάντων in the largest sense.) *To us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things.*[j] Neither only as author, but as he by whose care and providence all things subsist, and are contained in order: *He commanded, and they were created: he hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree, which shall not pass: Upon whom the eyes of all wait; and he giveth them their meat in due season*, as the Psalmist sings:[k] and in this respect we often find, even in heathen poets, the title *Pater* (Father) absolutely put to denote God, as the author and disposer of all things.

———Pater ipse colendi
Haud facilem esse viam voluit.
Virg. Georg. i.
Jam satis tereis nivis atque diræ
Grandinis misit Pater.——*Hor.*

And *Pater omnipotens* is the periphrasis by which the wisest of poets doth frequently use to design the supreme God.* But more especially God is called *the Father of intellectual beings; the Father of Spirits;*[l] particularly the angels are (by excellency) called *the sons of God:* (Job i. 6), *There was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them:* (Job xxxviii. 7), *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy:* where, for *the sons of God*, the Seventy have ἄγγελοι μου† (though perhaps all God's creatures may there be understood, as it were *rejoicing* and *exulting* in their being, newly conferred on them by God.) And of these beings God more especially is Father, not only for that he did produce them, and upholds them, as all other things, in being, but because they nearer resemble him in their nature; because he hath a more dear affection unto, a more particular care over them, and because he governs them in a more excellent kind (by obligations of reason, ingenuity, and justice), they also being capable to render offices of piety, obedience, and gratitude, to him again. [And thus even the pagan theologers did conceive God in especial manner the Father of the Gods* (intending such gods as were not of men's making, creatures consecrated by the flattery or fondness of men; but of a higher rank, answering to our angels, which they conceived, as to approach in excellency of nature, so to attend upon God, partaking of his glory and happiness;) hence *Divum Pater* is a common title of God among them: and we have in Plato's Timæus an oration, which he feigns God made to them at the creation, beginning thus:[m] Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ Δημιουργὸς, Πατήρτε· *O ye principal gods, of whom I am the Maker and Father:* concerning which kind of God's children he pretends to deduce all he can speak from ancient and original tradition.] But (to come nearer to our particular relation) God is also in especial manner the Father of mankind,

Gentis humanæ Pater atque Custos,

as Horace calls him: Adam was the son of God; and so, at least, we are God's offspring;† *his hands made and fashioned us, and his mouth breathed into us the spirit of life: he formed our spirit within us:*[n] we were made after his image, and naturally resemble him:[o] he hath assigned us the principal and most honourable station in this his family of visible creatures; he hath showed an especial tenderness toward us in providing for us all manner of sustenance and accommodation; in educating us with wholesome advices and precepts; in bearing with exceeding patience our infirmities and of-

[i] Plat. p. 1047.
[j] Eph. iv. 6; 1 Cor. viii. 6.
[k] Psal. cxlviii. 5, 6; cxlv. 15.
[l] Heb. xii. 9; Numb. xvi. 22; Ezek. xviii. 4.
* Ζεῦ, πάτερ ἡμέτερε, Κρονίδη, ὅπατε κρειόντων. O Pater et Rex Jupiter. *Hor. Serm.* ii 1.
† *Vide* Psal. lxxxix. 6; xxix. 1.—The sons of the mighty, some take to be the angels, בני אלים, in heaven.

* Ὅτι κοινωνεῖν μόνον ταῦτα πέφυκε τῷ Θεῷ τῆς συναναστροφῆς κατὰ τὸν λόγον ἐπικεκλιγμένα.—Epict. Ar. i. 9.
† Carm. i. 12.——Omnes si ad primam originem revocentur a Diis sunt.—*Sen. Ep.* 44.
[m] Pag. 1054.
[n] Zech. xii. 1.
Vide Epict. Arr. i. 3, 9,

fences;[p] in inflicting moderate chastisements, to reduce us to duty and amendment: all his carriage toward mankind argues a paternal regard and affection thereto.

Further; in a peculiar notion God is the Father of good men: such relation being built upon higher grounds and considerations; the seeds of virtue are by his grace sown in their hearts: that emendation and perfection of nature is effected by him.[q] They resemble him in disposition of mind, in purpose, in action; which are more perfect and noble resemblances than those of nature (being holy as he is holy; beneficent and merciful as he is:* these qualities, our Saviour tells us, do render, or at least declare him our Father; do constitute men, or argue them to be, the sons of God: *Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you—that you may be the sons of your Father in heaven: Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing thence; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the Most High.*[r]) To such God bears a paternal affection and compassion: *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*[s] He deals with them as with his children, in all respects; he instructs and guides them;[t] he cherishes and comforts them; he maintains and protects them; he gently reproves and corrects them: *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.*[u] [*Patrium habet Deus adversus bonos viros animum, et illos fortiter amat: inter bonos viros ac Deum amicitia est, conciliante virtute: amicitiam dico? imo etiam necessitudo et similitudo: quoniam quidem bonus ipse tempore tantum a Deo differt, discipulus ejus, æmulatorque et vera progenies; quem pater ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor, sicut severi patres, durius educat:*[v] God, saith a pagan philosopher, hath a fatherly mind toward good men, and mightily loves them: between them and God there is a friendship, virtue conciliating it: a friendship, say I? yea, a kindred and resemblance: for that a good man differs only from God in time (and degree), being his disciple and imitator, and his true offspring; whom that magnificent Father, no softly exactor of virtue, as severe fathers do, brings up hardly.] And we may observe, that God, in his proceedings with men (such as he designs to contain them by within their duty, and lead them to happiness), delights to represent and commend himself under this obliging and endearing relation. He did so towards the Israelites, Deut. xxxii. 6, 18: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy Father that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.* So God expostulates with that people. And thus David in their behalf addresses himself to God: *Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever: Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty*, &c.; and, *I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born: Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child?*[w] so God argues with them. But in the Christian dispensation God more signally represents himself in this quality: he treats us not so much as a Lord and master, with imperious awfulness; but as a friend and a father, with gracious condescension and allurement of kindness: *I call you not servants; you are my friends, if you do what I command you:*[x] so that (it is St. Paul's collection from a precedent discourse (*thou art not still a servant, but a son.*[y] Our Saviour (saith the author to the Hebrews) was *not ashamed to call them* (his disciples and followers) *brethren.*[z] *Go* (saith our Saviour) *to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father; and my God, and your God.*[a] Accordingly all the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf, are of such a nature, and are set out by such terms, which ground and import this relation.

1. That renovation of our nature, and qualifying our souls, as the gospel requires, is called *regeneration, a new creation, a new birth, the begetting a new*

* Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est.—*Sen. Ep.* 41.

[p] Psal. lxxi. 6. [q] 1 Pet. i. 23.

[r] Matt. v. 44; Luke vi. 35. [s] Psal. ciii. 13.

[t] Ὡς υἱοῖς προσφέρεται, Heb. xii. 7.

[u] Prov. iii. 12. [v] Sen. de Prov. i. 2.

[w] 1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11; *vide* Exod. iv. 22; Jer. xxxi. 9, 20.

[x] John xv. 14, 15. [y] Gal. iv. 7.

[z] Heb. ii. 11. [a] John xx. 17.

man within us.[b] We are αὐτὸν ποίημα (his *work*, or *production*), being *created in Christ Jesus to good works. Ye have been taught—to put on the new man, that is created according to God* (according to God's image) *in righteousness and true holiness:*[c] *If a man be not born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God: Whoever is begot of God doth not do sin.*[d]

2. The reception of a believer into the privileges and advantages of Christianity, is termed υἱοθεσία, the making of him a son; adopting him into God's family; conferring upon him the title and the quality of God's child;[e] the internal dispoistion of spirit, and the liberty of access to God suitable to this relation: *Whosoever* (saith St. John) *did receive him, he gave to them authority to become the sons of God,*[f] (he invested them in that dignity;) *even to them who believed in his name: Ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus*[g] (*i. e.* by embracing Christianity:) and, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God: Ye have not received the spirit of servitude again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, O Father,*[i] (by which, in our prayers, with humble affection, according to our Saviour's instruction, we say, *Our Father.*)

3. That resurrection after death to a better state of life, entering into glory and happiness and immortality, is worthily styled παλιγγενεσία, a being *generated* or *born again;*[j] whereby they receive from God another more excellent life and state of being, more like and comfortable to God: *They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead—are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection.*[k] *We know that if* (or when) *he shall appear, we shall be like him. As we have borne the image of the earthly* (man), *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*[l] We shall be metamorphosed (or transfigured) into the same image; shall be made *partakers of the divine nature.*[m] That state of bliss is therefore styled a *portion*, or *inheritance*, allotted to sons; and consequent upon that relation, *If sons* (saith St. Paul) *then heirs; heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ; receiving the reward and promise of an eternal inheritance:* and, saith St. Peter, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.*[n] I might add, that Christian men become the sons of God by our Saviour's intervention; by his assumption of our nature, and our conformity to his image, as St. Paul speaks, whereby he becomes *the firstborn among many brethren*, Rom. viii. 29. *God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, that we might receive the privilege of being made sons*, Gal. iv. 4, 5. In this sespect our Saviour is πρωτότοκος ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, *the first born among many brethren*, Rom. viii. 29.[o] Upon so many several scores is God our Father; as we are his creatures (being made, preserved, and maintained by him;) as we are intellectual creatures (placed in degree and quality of nature so near him;) as we by virtue and goodness anywise resemble him; as we are Christians (adopted into his family, renewed by his grace, and destinated to a participation of his glory.)

Now the consideration and belief of these grounds (each one and all of them together), upon which this relation of God to us is founded, hath manifold good uses, is apt to inform us of, to enforce upon us many necessary duties, resulting from it.[p] It teaches us what reverence and honour and observance is due to him (not from gratitude only, and ingenuity, but in justice:) *If I be a Father, where is my honour?*[q] saith God in Malachi. If we be bound to love and respect those who, under God, have been instrumental in producing and maintaining us, how much

[b] Ephes. ii. 10.
[c] Eph. iv. 21, 24; Col. iii. 10.
[d] John iii. 3; 1 John iii. 9.
[e] Gal. iv. 5; Rom. viii. 15; Eph. i. 5; iii. 15; ii. 19.
[f] John i. 12.
[g] Gal. iii. 26.
[h] 1 John iii. 1.
[i] Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6.
[j] Matt. xix. 28.
[k] Luke xx. 35.
[l] 1 John iii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 49; 2 Cor. iii. 18.
[m] 2 Pet. i. 4; Gal. iv. 7.
[n] Rom. viii. 17; Col. iii. 24; Heb. ix. 15; 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.
[o] Heb. ii. 14.
[p] *Vide* Forb. p. 52.
[q] Mal. i. 6.

more to him, who principally hath bestowed our being, and all the supports, comforts, and conveniences thereof, upon us? from whose free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this transitory life, but the privileges of the future, incomparably better, eternal state. If we neglect our duty, may not God justly expostulate with us, as with those children of his, Deut. xxxii. 6, 18: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is he not thy Father that bought thee?* (ὃς ἐκτήσατο σε, who procured and acquired thee to himself;) *hath he not made thee, and established thee?*

It will induce us to humility; If we are God's sons, have received our being, all our powers and abilities, all our goods and riches, from his disposal, what reason have we to ascribe any thing to ourselves; to be raised in conceit, ambitious of praise or reputation, upon the score of any such things? *Who made thee to differ? for what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received?*[r] It shows us that we are, as Plato often speaks, Θεοῦ κτήματα, *God's possessions*, *God's riches* they are called, Psal. civ. 24. If he made us, whatever we are (according to all accounts and capacities; whether men by his common providence, or good men by his especial grace), he hath the best right and title possible unto us; he may justly make such use of us as he thinks good:[s] we may well be obliged to *glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's.*[t] We have reason also hence to be content with whatsoever condition God disposeth us unto, or imposeth upon us; he doth therein justly; and, if we complain, may we not be answered, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?*[u] Is it not lawful? yea, is it not probable, that God will order things for the best, for the good of his children? Will he willingly hurt them? Can he design their mischief? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.*[v] Sooner may the most tender parents become naturally regardless, malicious, and cruel towards their children, than God neglect the good of his offspring. We have reason therefore to be satisfied with all that befalls us; to be patient in the sorest afflictions, esteeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed and tending to our good: *Thou shalt consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, the Lord thy God chasteneth thee*, saith God to the Israelites.[w] *We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*[x] What sweeter comfort can there be, than to know that the most distasteful and cross accidents befalling us do conduce to our profit, shall prove most beneficial to us? This consideration also serves to cherish our faith, and raise our hope, and quicken our devotion. Whom shall we confide in, if not in our Father? From whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath given us already so much, even all we have? If we in our need, with due reverence and submission, request help from him, can such a father refuse us? No. *What man is there of us, that if his son ask him bread, will give him a stone? or if he ask fish, will give him a serpent? If we then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*[y]

This consideration also may beget in us a due valuation of ourselves; and thereby raise us from base and unworthy practices; excite and encourage us to worthy designs and attempts; even natural light dictates to us the use of this consideration, and heathen philosophers much apply it: "If any one," saith Epictetus, "could duly be affected with this opinion, that we are all originally descended from God, and that God is the father both of men and Gods, he would not, I suppose, conceive any thing ignoble or mean concerning himself: if Cæ-

[r] 1 Cor. iv. 7.
[s] ἐκτήσατο—Deut. xxxii. 6.
[t] 1 Cor. vi. 20.
[u] Matt. xx. 15.
[v] Isa. lxx. 15.
[w] Deut. viii. 5.
[x] Heb. xii. 9, 10.
[y] Matt. vii. 9, 10, 11.

sar should adopt thee, none could endure thy superciliousness: and if thou knowest that thou art God's son, will it not elevate thee?"[z] So the philosopher. Shall we that are so nobly born, of so illustrious an extraction, so far debase ourselves, as to regard and pursue trivial, abject, dishonourable things? Shall we not be ashamed of such a contemptible degeneracy? shall we not be afraid, for such unworthiness to be degraded, rejected, and disinherited by our holy Father? who can nowise brook that such blots and dishonours should stick to his lineage, that such disorders and misbehaviour should be committed in his family, that we should so deform his image impressed upon us: *Every branch that beareth not good fruit, he loppeth it from his stock, and casteth it away*, as our Saviour tells us.[a] It is proper for children to resemble their father, in their countenance, in their temper, in their doings: *If ye were Abraham's children* (so our Saviour argues) *ye would do the works of Abraham:* and, *Ye are of your father the Devil, because ye perform the lusts of your father;*[b] because ye resemble him in his murderous and treacherous disposition.) So if we pretend to be the children of God, we must, according to St. Paul's exhortation, imitate him *as dear children:* we must be holy, and pure, just, beneficent, merciful, perfect, as he is; otherwise we fall from this high dignity, we forfeit this excellent privilege of being thus related to God; we become aliens and exiles, and enemies, instead of sons and friends, unto him.[c]

Considering also this relation will prompt us how we should be affected, and how behave ourselves towards all God's creatures: if God be the father of all things, they are in some sort all our brethren: shall we then abuse, trample upon, or tyrannize over any of them? will God permit it, doth it become us to do so? If we be all branches sprouting from one root, streams issuing from one common source of divine beneficence, members of one family, we are obliged to universal good-will and charity;[d] to be kind and compassionate; to be helpful and beneficial, so far as our capacity reacheth; to endeavour as we may, to preserve the order, and promote the welfare of the world, and all things in it. Especially toward those beings, who, according to a more proper and excellent sense, are entitled the sons of this our common Father; toward beings intellectual, we hence learn our respective duties of love and respect toward those elder brethren of ours, the angels (the blessed and holy ones, I mean, such as have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty toward God;) of charity and good-will to each other; which if we do not maintain, let us consider we are undutiful and unkind to God first, and then to ourselves; both his relations and our own we hate and harm, his children and our brethren, by hating or harming any man whatever, especially any good man, any Christian brother, who by so many other more especially bands is straitly tied unto us, upon so many better grounds doth stand related both to God and us.

But let thus much suffice for this attribute or title of God, understood in this manner, as applicable to God essentially considered; which notion we see how true and useful it is. But that God is also here (and that according to the principal intention of the words) to be understood so as by way of eminency to signify the first Person in the blessed Trinity, and that the title or apposition *Father* doth respect especially him, who, according to a more proper and excellent manner, is *the Son of God, our Lord Christ Jesus*, may upon divers accounts appear:* 1. Because it follows, *and in Jesus Christ his Son:* God is to be taken in that notion according to which Christ is his Son: the *Father* preceding relates to the *Son* following. 2, Because this Creed appears (according to our former Discourses) enlarged upon the foundation of the first most simple confessions used in baptism, and those derived from the form prescribed by our Saviour, of *baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:* wherefore *the Father* here is to be interpreted according to that form.

[z] Epict. Dissert. i. 3.
[a] John xv. 2, 6.
[b] John viii. 39, 44.
[c] Eph. v. 1; 1 Pet. i. 14, 15; Matt. v. 45; v. 48; Luke vi. 35, 36; John i. 3; iii. 17.
[d] *Vide* Epict. i. 9, Dissert.

* Κατὰ τίνα σχέσιν ὑψηλοτέραν, (as Nazianzen speaks.)—*Orat.* 37.

3. The ancient Christians (from whom we received the words, and may best understand the sense) did thus generally take and expound them. Now that God is the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, the universal tenor of the gospel speaketh, and it is the chief doctrine thereof:[e] this God from heaven by a vocal attestation declared (*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;*[f]) our Saviour professed; the appostles preached; the miracles (performed by our Saviour) were intended to confirm. In this God manifested his transcendent love and mercy and goodness to mankind, that *he gave his only begotten Son, that no believer in him should perish, but have everlasting life; that he did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all:*[g] his own Son ἴδιος υἱὸς, his peculiar Son, in a more proper and peculiar manner so: his μονογενὴς, only begotten Son (in a respect, according to which no other can pretend to that relation;) his ἀγαπητὸς, his darling (whom he loves with a superlative dearness.) So that God is *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* and that it is a fundamental point of our religion and belief; and that it is mainly designed here, doth sufficiently appear. Now the grounds of this paternity are several: his temporal generation by the Spirit and power of God; *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God: When the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman.*[h] His restoral from death to life: *We preach the promise made to your fathers, that God hath fulfilled it to us their children, raising up Jesus;*[i] *according also to what is written in the second Psalm, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:* whence he is called πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, *the firstborn from the dead.*[j] His designation of him to sovereign power and authority: *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*, was Nathaniel's confession, *whom God appointed* (or *made*) *heir of all; putting all things under his feet.*[k] *Father* (our Saviour prays), *glorify thy Son, as thou hast given him power over all flesh: All power is given me in heaven and upon earth.*[l] But the most eminent ground of this paternity (and most proper to this place) is that eternal generation, whereby God the Father did in the beginning, before all time imaginable or possible (in a manner unconceivable and ineffable), communicate his own divine essence to God the Son: his essence, not specifically the same (such as men impart when they beget a son in their own likeness), but the same individual; begetting him perfectly like himself, without any so much as accidental dissimilitude or disparity; (by an unconceivable irradiation of his glory, and impression of his substance, as the author to the Hebrews speaks.*)

Which doctrine (though full of deep mistery, and transcending the capacity of our understanding to comprehend), as we are obliged, because it hath been God's good pleasure to reveal it unto us, with a firm faith and humble adoration to embrace, so it is of great consequence and (even practical) use; serving to illustrate the wonderful grace of God in the dispensation evangelical, and thereby to beget suitable gratitude in us; encouragement and enforcement to our duty, strong faith and hope in God; as also to direct and order our devotion toward him.

But these considerations (with the further probation of this great truth against some, who have dared to oppose it) I shall refer to that article, in which we most expressly confess, that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, and consequently that *God is his Father.*† And therefore proceed to the next word,

Almighty.

Though all the divine perfections (be-

[e] John x. 38.
[f] Matt. iii. 17.
[g] John iii. 16; Rom. viii. 32.
[h] Luke i. 35; Gal. iv. 4.
[i] Acts xiii. 32, 33.
[j] Col. i. 18.

* Heb. i. 3; Col. i. 15.—ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως.

† Omne nomen dictum de Deo respectu creaturæ indicat essentiam, adeoque prædicatur de tribus personis simul, exceptis quæ pertinent ad unionem seu dispensationem, id est ad incarnationem sive assumptam carnem.—*Forb.* p. 24.

[k] John i. 49; Heb. i. 2.
[l] Compare John xvii. 1, 2; *vide* John v. 25, &c.; Matt. xxviii. 18; Eph. i. 22; Heb. i. 6.

ing intrinsical unto, and identified with, the divine nature or essence) do really and equally belong to each Person of the blessed Trinity, yet are eminently in some respect attributed to the Father, as the first Person in order of nature, the original fountain and root of the Deity:[m] likewise although all divine operations *ad extra* (as proceeding from the same divine will and power) do proceed from all the three Persons, conspiring in them, yet are some κατ' οἰκονομίαν (by way of mysterious dispensation), appropriated to one, some to another: as creation and dilection to the Father: reconciliation and redemption to the Son: illumination and sanctification to the Holy Ghost.* Omnipotency, therefore, is here ascribed to God the Father not exclusively, but eminently (for the Son and the Holy Ghost by participation of the divine nature from the Father are also omnipotent.†) And God the father is called *the Maker of heaven and earth;* although by the Son (or Eternal Word) also *all things were made, and without him was made nothing that was made:* and *all things were created by him, both things in heaven, and things in earth, and things upon earth; both things visible, and things invisible:*[n] and the Spirit of God is said to have *garnished the heavens* (Job xxvi. 13;) and, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the spirst of his mouth*, Psal. xxxiii. 6. This I premise to prevent mistake, in supposing the glorious perfections, of works attributed to *God the Father*, to be ascribed to him, in distinction, and excluding the other Persons.[o] Now to the attributes themselves.

Almighty. The title or epithet παντοκράτωρ (which we render *Almighty*, or *Omipotent*, there being no other word more properly and fully to express it) is often (in a manner peculiar and characteristical) ascribed to *God* in the scripture; but in the New Testament from *imitation* (as it seems) or *translation* of the Greek in the Old, where it answers to two famous and usual names of God, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai* (especially to the former, for the latter is only so rendered in some places of the book of Job;) the name *Sabaoth*, I say (for that it is so, we have expressly affirmed in several places: *Their Redeemer is strong; Jehovah Sabaoth is his name*, Jer. 1. 34; (so also Isa. xlviii. 2), and Amos iv. 13. *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought—Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his name:*[p] from whence some critics deduce Ζεὺς Σαββάσιος, mentioned in some heathen writers.) Now the name *Sabaoth* doth seem to import God's universal dominion over the world: for all things of the world, as being ranged in a goodly order (like an army marching in array, or marshalled to battle) are called *armies:*[q] thus the heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them (καὶ πᾶς κόσμος αὐτῶν, saith the Greek: and all the world, or the furniture of them:[r]) *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them: Bless the Lord all ye his hosts*[s] (that is, all creatures:) *Lift up your eyes on high* (saith the prophet Isaiah) *and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power, not one faileth:*[t] where God is represented bringing forth, and ordering his creatures, as a general summons together to a rendezvous, and musters and embattles his host. Hence, I say, this title of *God* (παντοκράτωρ) seems derived (which in the Revelation of St. John is most frequently attributed to him: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty*, ὁ παντοκράτωρ, *who was, and is, and art to be*, is that heavenly hymn there resounded to God.[u]) But not dealing so strictly, but taking the word παντοκράτωρ in its common latitude, for ὁ πάντων κρατῶν (or ὁ πάντων κράτος ἔχων), it may import, either right and authority over all

* Quando unus trium in aliquo opere nominatur, universa operari Trinitas intelligitur.—*Aug.*

Una voluntas est Patris et Filii, et inseparabilis operatio.—*Id.*

† Sancta et inseparabilis Trinitas nunquam aliquid extra se sigillatim operare noverit.—*Ambros. in Symb.* cap. ix. *Forb.* p. 23.

[m] *Vide* Rom. xvi. 27.

[n] John i. 3.; Col. i. 16.

[o] John v. 19; Matt. xii. 28.

[p] Amos iv. 13; Isa. xviii. 7; xlviii. 2.

[q] Seld. de Diis S. cap. 3; Aristoph. et Cicero.

[r] Gen. ii. 1. [s] Psal. xxxiii. 6; ciii. 21.

[t] Isa. xl. 26; compare Psal. cxlvii. 4.

[u] Rev. i. 8; iv. 8; xi. 17, &c.

(*omnipotestas ;*) or power and ability to do all things (*omnipotentia ;*) or actual exercise of such authority and power, in ruling and disposing all things (*omnipotentatus ;*) also the possession or holding all things (*omnitenentia ;*) and the preservation or upholding all things (*omnicontinentia ;*) for κρατεῖν hath in propriety and ordinary use all these significations ; and according to them all, God is truly παντοκράτωρ. He hath, first, a just right and authority over all things ; he is naturally the sovereign Lord and King of the world, *The Lord of lords, and King of kings ;* the spring and original of all right and authority. Whatever imaginable reason or ground there is of authority, it doth in respect of all things agree to God. Aristotle in his Politics discourseth thus : Government doth aim at and tend to the mutual benefit of the governor and governed ; that therefore which is most able and best disposed to provide for and procure the common benefit, in natural reason and justice deserves to be, and is fitly the governor ;[v] whence the soul hath a right to govern the body, and men naturally do rule over beasts ; and were there any such men as did so eminently exceed others in wisdom and goodness, to them, according to natural congruity, the government of others should appertain. If, then, such excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, God, who in wisdom and goodness doth incomparably exceed all things, hath a right to govern all : he is only wise (and thence able), only good (and thence willing to manage all for the general welfare and benefit of the world.[w]) If eminency of power do qualify for dominion (as surely it doth, for what cannot be withstood, must in reason be submitted unto ; it is vain to question that authority which by force altogether irresistible can maintain itself), God hath the only right ; nothing in the world being able to dispute his title : *For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord ? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord ? O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee ?*[x] All things are weak and feeble in comparison ; are in his hand ; lie under his feet ; are wholly at his discretion and disposal : *The Lord is the true God* (saith the prophet) *and the everlasting king ; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*[y] *How terrible art thou in thy works ! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee : He ruleth by his power for ever ; his eyes behold the nations : let not the rebellious exalt themselves.*[z] If to have made all things and to preserve them, do create a right of governing (as it must needs : for what can we challenge justly a dominion over, if not over our own works ; over that which we feed and nourish continually ; over that which depends altogether upon us, and which subsits but at our pleasure ?) then well may the elders acknowledge, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory and the honour and the power ;* (that is, the royal majesty and dominion over the world :) *for thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are and were made.*[a] Well might every creature that is in the heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and those things which are in the sea, and all things in them, cry out, *To him that sitteth upon the throne* (and to the Lamb) *be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion for ever and ever :*[b] and Nehemiah, *Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone ; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein, the sea, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all ; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee :*[c] and king Hezekiah, *O Lord of hosts—thou art the God, thou alone of all the kingdoms of the earth : thou hast made heaven and earth.*[d]

Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, the rightful sovereign (upon all accounts) of all things ; *Divumque hominumque æterna potestas*[e] (as the wise heathen poet could acknowledge and call him :) he is also so in regard of his infinite power (omnipotent :) natural light affords us

[v] Psal. cxxxvi. 3 ; Deut. x. 17 ; 1 Tim. vi. 16 ; Rev. xix. 19 ; Pol. i. 1, 3, 4.—Τὸ δυνάμενον διανοίᾳ προορᾶν, ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει.—i. 1.

[w] Rom. xvi. 27 ; Luke xviii. 19.

[x] Psal. lxxxix. 6, 8.

[y] Jer. x. 10.

[z] Psal. lxvi. 3, 7.

[a] Rev. iv. 11.

[b] Rev. v. 13, Τὸ κράτος.

[c] Neh. ix. 6.

[d] Isa. xxxvii. 16.

[e] Virg. 10, Æn.

pregnant arguments and experiments of the *greatness of his power*, demonstrated in the constitution and conservation of the world (disposing so stupendously vast, so innumerably various creatures into so comely and stable a posture: by them his eternal power and divinity are discerned, as St. Paul tells us:[f]) he that could effect so much, his power must needs be greater than we can imagine or comprehend: but holy scripture declares more fully and clearly the extent of his power; that it reaches unto the utmost possibility of things; that whatever is not repugnant to his nature (to his essential perfections, his wisdom, and goodness), doth not misbecome him to do, or to the nature of things to be done (that doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is impossible, and no object of any power), he can easily achieve: there is nothing so difficult, but he can perform it: nothing so strong or stubborn, but he can subdue it: *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?*[g] saith God to Abraham, when Sarah doubted or admired concerning God's promise, that she in so extreme an age should become fruitful. *Behold* (saith the prophet Jeremiah in his prayer to God) *thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power, and thy stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:*[h] Οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει παρὰ Θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα· *Nothing* (that can be said, or conceived, or done) *shall be impossible to God*[i] (if he pleases to undertake it), said the angel to the blessed Virgin, when he delivered so strange a message to her, concerning an event so wonderful and supernatural. That a rich man should be induced to part with all, and submit to God's will, our Saviour affirmed exceedingly difficult (*harder than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle:*[j]) but to satisfy his disciples' scruple thence arising, he subjoins, *With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. In thine hand* (saith Jehoshaphat) *there is power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee.*[k] *He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*[l] Nebuchadnezzar (having felt an experiment of his power, and being returned to a right understanding) did so confess: *The Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?*[m] he is *El Shaddai*, the God all-sufficient; able to do whatever he pleases. He made the world at first with a word (*By the word of the Lord were the heavens made*, saith the Psalmist, *and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth:—let the earth fear the Lord:—for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;*[n]) and by a word he doth preserve it (*upholding all things*, saith the Apostle, *by the word of his power*, or by his mighty word;[o]) and by a word he can destroy all things; yea more easily, in a manner, by his silence; by withdrawing that salutary breath, which cherisheth all things: (*Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou withholdest thy breath, they die, and return to their dust:*[p]) for even in this respect is God all-powerful, for that all power is derived from and depends upon him: he not only can do all things, but nothing can be done without him: *Without me you can do nothing*, is true not only in spiritual matters, but in all others:* *He gives*, as St. Paul preached at Athens, *life* (or being with all vital faculties), *and breath* (all natural powers), *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather, by him) *we live, and move, and have our being;*† whatever we have, or can do, proceeds from him: thus is God almighty. He is also so, by reason that he doth actually exercise all dominion, and exerts his power, according to his pleasure; he hath not only a just title to govern all things, and ability to sway, but he uses them: *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all: The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens: Who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himself, to behold the things that*

[f] Rom. i. 20.
[g] Gen. xviii. 14.
[h] Jer. xxxii. 17, 27.
[i] Luke i. 37.
[j] Job xlii. 2; Matt. xix. 24, 26.
[k] 2 Chron. xx. 6.

* Εἰ Θεὸν οἶσθα, ἴσθι, ὅτι καὶ δαίμονι ῥέξαι πᾶν δυνατόν.—Callim. Plut. de Plac. i. 1; John xv. 5.
† Acts xvii. 25, 28. Ῥᾴδια πάντα Θεῷ τελέσαι καὶ ἀδύνατον οὐδέν.
[l] Dan. iv. 35.
[m] Isa. xiv. 27.
[n] Psal. xxxiii. 6, 8, 9.
[o] Heb. i. 3.
[p] Psal. civ. 29.

are in heaven, and in the earth :[q] It is indeed a great condescension in God, that he will vouchsafe the government of things, so much inferior to him; yet for the general good he doth it: *Thine* (saith David) *is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all : both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all : in thine hand is power and might*, &c.[r] He is indeed the only governor, absolutely and directly so (*μόνος δυνάστης*, the *only potentate ;*[s] all authority and power are imparted by him, are subordinate to him; by his disposal and direction all potentates receive them; and in his behalf, by virtue of his commission and command, as his delegates and officers, they administer any dominion or power: it was Nebuchadnezzar's doom to be driven from men until he did know this truth (so necessary for all princes to know and consider), *that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will :*[t] *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*[u] *Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south : but God is the judge ; he putteth down one, and setteth up another :*[v] *There is no power but from God ; the powers that are, are appointed by God : The judgment is God's* (said Moses in his charge), exercised in his behalf, and according to his appointment.[w] Thus is God *παντοκράτωρ ;* the only direct sovereign commander; the author and fountain of all authority, *the Lord of lords, and King of kings.*[x] He also is *παντοκράτωρ*, as the true proprietary and just possessor of all things (*omnitenens :*) *Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth*, saith Melchizedek :[y] *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof ; the world, and they that dwell therein : for he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods :*[z] *Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is*, saith Moses :[a] and the Psalmist again : *The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine : as for the world and the fulness thereof ;* (that is, all which the world contains, which it is replenished with :) *The sea is his, and* (that is, *for*) *he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.*[b] Thou hast founded them : all things are God's goods and possessions (for that he hath made, and by creation purchased them to himself; so we see the Psalmist argues), and so the disposal of them do belong unto him; he may and doth apply them to what use he pleaseth. He is also *omnitenens* (it is St. Austin's word), as containing all things in his hand, encircling and comprehending them, as it were, in his arms: *Whither shall I go from thy spirit ?* (saith the Psalmist) *or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there : if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*[c]

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure ?[d]

Mine hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my hand hath spanned the heavens.[e]

He lastly is *παντοκράτωρ*, in regard that he sustains and preserves all things: *Οὐκοῦν* (saith Gregory Nyssen) *ὅταν τῆς παντοκράτωρ φωνῆς ἀκούομεν τοῦτο νοοῦμεν τὸ πάντα τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ εἶναι συνέχειν.* When we hear the word *almighty*, we understand that God doth contain all things in being, *Thou, even thou* (say the Levites in Nehemiah), *art Lord alone ; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all ; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*[f] In all these respects is God truly almighty.

The belief and consideration of which truths are of great importance and use to us: if God be the sovereign Lord of all things (which is the chief sense of this article), and we consequently his subjects and vassals; then is all awful reverence,

[q] Psal. ciii. 19; *vide* Psal. xlvii.; cxiii. 4, 5, 6.
[r] 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.
[s] 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[t] Dan. iv. 25.
[u] Dan. vii. 27.
[v] Psal. lxxv. 6, 7.
[w] Rom. xiii. 1; John xix. 11; Deut. i. 17.
[x] 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[y] Gen. xiv. 19.
[z] Psal. xxiv. 1; l. 12.
[a] Deut. x. 14.
[b] Psal. lxxxix. 11; 1 Chron. xxix. 11; Psal. xcv. 5.
[c] Psal. cxxxix. 7-10.
[d] Isa. xl. 12.
[e] Isa. xlviii. 13.
[f] Neh. ix. 6.

worship, and obedience, due from us to him: we are in justice bound humbly to adore his majesty, and readily to perform his commands, and patiently to submit to his will. We must not think to guide our actions according to our own will or fancy, as if we had no Lord over us; but conform them we must to the decrees and determinations of our most good and wise Governor.* It is our duty to do thus, and we have reason to do it willingly and cheerfully; for it is also our happiness to be under so just and gracious a government: it is no cruel tyrant, no unjust usurper, but a most gracious and equal King, whom we are in subjection to; of whom it is said truly, *Justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face;*[g] whom we are exceedingly obliged to thank that he will vouchsafe to undertake the tuition and oversight of us: so that in this consideration the Psalmist might well excite the world to joy and jubilation: *O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph: for the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.*[h] All the world hath reason, not only to be content and acquiesce, but to rejoice and triumph in being subject to such a Governor, so able, so willing to maintain good order, peace, and equity therein.†

Also, if God be omnipotent, able to do all things, and of irresistible power, then have we all reason, 1. To hope in his providence, and rely upon his promises. For that he is able to supply us with all we need, and perform whatever he hath promised.‡ It was Abraham's virtue‖ (so acceptable to God, and so richly rewarded by him), that he did not *stagger at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform.*[i] It was the Israelites' great offence that so incensed God, that *they spake against God; saying, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?*[j] Our Saviour upon this account took it ill of his disciples, that in the greatest dangers they should be afraid, or in the least manner distrust.[k] Since nothing is impossible, nothing difficult to him (that can be done, or which he will promise), we should not, in respect of any difficulty or improbability appearing, doubt in the least; it is injury to him, it is folly, it is blasphemy to do it.

2. We should hence dread God; fear to oppose his will, or provoke his displeasure. Is it not a madness for impotency (such as ours) to contend with or withstand Omnipotency, that can so easily crush us into misery, into nothing? *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations?* (Jer. x, 6, 7.) *Fear you not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea,* &c. (Jer. v. 22.) It is the argument by which Moses enforces obedience to the Law, for that *the Lord is a great God, a mighty and a terrible.* (Deut. x. 17.) Our Saviour admonishes and inculcates earnestly, *Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; I say unto you, Fear him.* (Luke xii. 5.) *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?* St. Paul urges; *are we stronger than he?* No, let us follow St. Peter's advice (1 Pet. 5, 6), and *humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.* But I leave these, and other applications easily emergent from these points of doctrine, to your further meditation.

It may be demanded, why, beside that of *almighty*, no other attribute of God is expressed in our Creed; why, for instance, the perfections of infinite wisdom and goodness are therein omitted. I answer, 1. That all such perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profess to believe, we conse-

* Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετήσοντες πάρεσμεν, &c.—Plut. ad Apol. p. 193, 194.

† Cons. Socrates in Plato's Phædo, &c.

‡ Τραχὺς μονάρχης, οὐδ' ὑπεύθυνος κρατεῖ. Æschyl. Prom.

‖ —— οὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν παλινάγρετον, οὐδ' ἀπατηλόν, Οὐδ' ἀτελεύτητόν γ', ὅ, τι κὲν κεφαλῇ κατανεύσω. Hom. Il. α'. 526.

[g] Psal. lxxxix. 14. [h] Psal. xlvii. 1, 2.

[i] Rom. iv. 20, 21.

[j] Psal. lxxviii. 19, 20.

[k] Matt. viii. 26; xiv. 31, Ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς τί ἐδίστασας; &c.

quently do ascribe them to him; for he that should profess to believe in God, not acknowledging those perfections, would be inconsistent and contradictious to himself; *Deum negaret* (as Tertullian speaks) *auferendo quod Dei est;*[l] he would deny God, withdrawing what belongs to God. 2. The title παντοκράτωρ, as implying God's universal providence in the preservation and government of the world, doth also involve or infer all divine perfections displayed therein; all that glorious majesty and excellency, for which he is with highest respect to be honoured and worshipped by us; which added to the name of God doth determine what God we mean, such as doth in all perfection excel, and therewith doth govern the world. I might add, 3. That the doctrine of God's universal providence being not altogether so evident to natural light, as those attributes discovered in the world (more having doubted thereof, and disputed against it with more plausibility), it was therefore convenient to add it, as a matter of faith clearly and fully (as we did show) attested unto by divine revelation. So much may suffice to remove such a scruple. I proceed.

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

This clause is one of those which was of later times inserted into this Creed, none of the more ancient expositors thereof (Augustin, Ruffin, Maximus Taurinensis, Chrysologus, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But Irenæus, Tertullian, and other most ancient writers, in their rules of faith exhibit the sense thereof; and the confessions of all general councils (the Nicene, and those after it) express it. And there is great reason for it, not only thereby to disavow and descry those prodigious errors of Marcion and Manichæus, and other such heretics, which did then ascribe the creation of the world (or of some parts thereof, seeming to their fancy less good and perfect) to another God (or principle), inferior in worth and goodness to that God which is revealed in the gospel; or did opinionate two principles (not distinct only, but contrary to each other), from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things. But also for that the creation of the world is that peculiar, august, and admirable work of God, by which we learn that he is and what he is; by which, I say, his existence is most strongly proved, and in which his divine perfections are most conspicuously diplayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and consequently is the chief ground of natural religion; of our subjection and duty and devotion toward him. This title also most especially characterizing and distinguishing that God whom we believe and adore, from all false and fictitious deities: for, as the Psalmist sings, *All the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens:*[m] and the prophet Jeremiah, *The gods that have not made the heavens, and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens:*[n] *And we preach unto you* (said St. Paul to the ignorant Lycaonians) *that ye should turn from those vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth.*[o] There was reason, therefore, more than sufficient, that the Creed should be enlarged and enriched with this so material insertion; that we should be obliged explicitly to acknowledge a point of so grand consideration and use. For the explication whereof, and the terms wherein it is conceived, we may observe, first, that the ancient Hebrews having (as it seems) in their language no one word properly signifying *the world* (or universal system of things created,*) did use instead thereof a collection of its chief parts (chief either absolutely in themselves, or in respect to us), *the heaven and the earth;* adding sometimes *the sea* (yea sometimes, for fuller explication, subjoining *to heaven its host, to earth its fulness, to the sea its contents;*) but most frequently *heaven and earth* are put to design the whole: *In six days* (saith Moses) *the Lord made heaven and earth: Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord: It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one*

[l] Adv. Marc. i. 3.

* Σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν τούτοις περιεχομένων φύσεων: it is Aristotle's definition of the word.—*De Mund.* 2.

[m] Psal. xcvi. 5.

[n] Jer. x. 11; *vide* 2 Kings xix. 15.

[o] Acts xiv. 15; xvii. 24.

tittle of the law to fail: God (saith St. Paul) *that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth:*[p] where the world, and all things therein, doth signify the same with *heaven and earth*, God's dominion being co-extended with his creation, as being grounded thereon. By *heaven and earth* therefore, I say we are to understand those two regions, superior and inferior, into which the whole frame of things is divided, together with all the beings that do reside in, belong unto, are comprehended by them; as we see sometimes fully expressed: *O Lord, thou art the God that hast made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things being in them,*[q] pray the apostles in the Acts: and with utmost distinction the angel in the Apocalypse *swears by him that liveth for ever, who created the heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth with the things that therein are, and the sea with the things therein.*[r]

By *heaven* is then understood all the superior region encompassing the earth, and from it on all sides extended to a distance inconceivably vast and spacious, with all its parts, furniture, and inhabitants; not only those that are visible and material, but also those that are immaterial and invisible. *By him* (saith St. Paul) *were created all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both those that are visible and those that are invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him:*[s] that is, not only the material and sensible parts (those bright and beautiful lamps of light exposed to our sight), but those beings of a more pure and refined substance, indiscernible therefore to our sense, how eminent soever in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity, whose ordinary residence* is in those superior regions (as being God's courtiers and domestic officers, attending upon and ministering unto him; *encircling his throne*, as it is in the Apocalypse, and *always beholding his face*, as our Saviour teaches us, Matt. xviii. 10), even these all were made by God: for they are included in the universal term *all:*[t] if God made all things in heaven (as we heard it told us by the mouth of an angel in St. John's revelation), then certainly the angels (the most considerable things therein.) And they are expressly called *the Sons of God* (as deriving their being from him; and they are subject to God's government and jurisdiction (which argues their proceeding from him and dependence upon him:[u]) and St. Jude tells us, they did not retain τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν, their beginning or primitive state: wherefore they had a beginning;[v] and whence that but from God, who alone (originally, intrinsically, and necessarily) hath immortality, and consequently (as Aristotle proveth by several reasons against Plato) alone hath eternity:[w] and the Psalmist calls them *God's works: Bless the Lord* (saith he) *ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word: bless the Lord, all his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure:* then concluding and recapitulating, he adds, *Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion;*[x] and again, in the 148th Psalm, summoning all the creation to a consort of doxology, he begins with the heavens, and then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts, and inhabitants belonging to each;[y] and in the first place reckoning the angels, then the stars, then the heaven of heavens, he subjoins the reason why they ought all to praise God: *Let them* (saith he) *praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created; he hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree* (concerning them) *which shall not pass.* Thus doth the scripture teach us concerning the existence and original of those sublime beings, to the knowledge of whom (that they are, what they are, whence they are) natural light could not reach; although from primitive tradition even the

* Ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, (as St. Jude 6. hath it), proper habitation

[p] Psal. lxix. 34; Neh. ix. 60; Gen. i. 1; Exod. xx. 11; 2 Kings xix. 15; Jer. xxiii. 24; Luke xvi. 17; Acts xvii. 24; *vide* Isa. xlii. 5.

[q] Acts iv. 24. [r] Rev. x. 6.

[s] Col. i. 16.

[t] Heb. i. 14; Dan. vii. 10; Rev. v. 11; Matt. xviii. 10; Κυκλόθεν τοῦ θρόνου.

[u] Job ii. 1; xxxviii. 7; Psal. lxxxix. 6; xxix. 1. [v] Jude 6; 1 Tim. vi. 16.

[w] De Cœlo, i. cap. ult.

[x] Psal. ciii. 20, 21, 22. [y] Psal. cxlviii.

heathens themselves did in a manner acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferior and secondary gods the children of the first and supreme God, as we did formerly touch, *θεοὶ θεῶν ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς πατήρ τε*: so God speaks to them in Plato's Timæus. And for all other things, both in heaven and earth, the material frame of the world, with all its parts (compacted together in so fair, so fit, so fast an order), we have before sufficiently discoursed, that they speak themselves (even to natural understanding) to have been produced by a most wise, most powerful, most beneficent author; that is, by God; which is confirmed by testimonies of holy writ innumerable, and which need not to be repeated.[z]

And thus much (as we did also formerly show) the generality of mankind hath always consented unto; as also the most and best reputed philosophers did (in general terms) avow it. There is only one particular wherein they seem to have disagreed (some or most of them) from what Christian piety obliges us to acknowledge; which concerns the matter of corporeal things: for even Plato himself (who so positively and exressly doth assert the world to have been framed by God) is yet conceived to suppose the matter of things to have been eternal and uncreated; ascribing only to God the forming and disposing it into a good order, agreeable to some patterns pre-existent in his wise understanding; even as a good artist doth out of an unshapen lump of matter frame a handsome piece of work, conformable to some idea preconceived in his mind. (Socrates and Plato, saith Plutarch, did suppose three principles of things, *τὸν θεὸν, τὴν ὕλην, τὴν ἰδέαν*, *God*, *Matter*, *Idea*: God is the mind, Matter the first subject of generation and corruption, Idea an incorporeal subsistence in the conceptions of God.[a] Anaxagoras also (the same author tells us, and Artstotle confirms it in his Metaphysics, commending his opinion) did affirm two principles, one *passive*, matter (consisting of an infinite number of small particles like to one another in shape), the other *active*, understanding; and to the same effect he reduces Pythagoras's conceits, though with much obscurity expressed.*) And Aristotle tells us, that generally all natural philosophers before him did conceive and assume it for a principle (it was *κοινὴ δόξα τῶν φυσικῶν, ὡς ρὺ γινομένου οὐδενὸς ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος*), that nothing was made out of nothing, or that every thing made had necessarily some pre-existent matter, out of which it was made;† [which principle Aristotle himself not only admits, in his sense, but extends farther, affirming it impossible, that any thing should be produced out of matter not predisposed to admit the form to be introduced: *Οὐδὲ γίνεται ὁτιοῦν ἐξ ὁτου οὖν*:‡ Every thing is not made of every thing; but out of some subject fitted thereto, or capable thereof; as animals and plants out of their seeds.] Which principles, being deduced from observation of natural effects (or works of art), performed always by alterations and transpositions of some subjacent matter, we may safely, in respect only to such kind of effects, admit; allowing no natural agent, no created artificer, able to produce any thing without some subject aptly qualified and prepared to receive its influence. But hence to conclude generally, that every action possible doth necessarily require a matter pre-existent, or predisposed subject, is nowise reasonable; because such a thing doth not usually according to the course of nature happen, therefore it is in itself absolutely impossible to be, is no good collection; no log-

[z] *Vide* Comment. in Ant. pag. 145.

[a] *Vide* Tertull. adv. Valent. cap. 15; et adv. Hermog. i. Cic. de Div. ii. sect. 37; Quis hoc physicus dixit unquam? De Placitis, i. 3; Anton. iv. sect. 4; Metaph. i. 3, 4.

* Thales's conceit was also in a manner the same; who (as Tully tells us, De Nat. Deor. i.) Aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret. The Stoics also had this opinion; as Lipsius by many testimonies proves in his Physiologia Stoica.

† *Δοκεῖ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀρχὰς εἶναι τῶν ὅλων δύο· τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον· τὸ μὲν οὖν πάσχον εἶναι τὴν ἄποιον ὕλην· τὸ δὲ ποιοῦν, τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ λόγον τὸν Θεόν.*—Laert. in Zen.; *vide* Sen. Epist. 65.

Ἐκ μὴ ὄντων γίγνεται ἀδύνατον περὶ τὰς ταύτης ὁμογνωμονοῦσι τῆς δόξης ἅπαντες οἱ περὶ φύσεως.

‡ Phys. i. 5, 9.—*Vide* locum luculentum.—*Metaph.* i. 3.——*Ἀεὶ ἐστὶ τι ὁ ὑπόκειται, ἐξ οὗ γίγνεται τὸ γιγνόμενον, οἷον τὰ φυτὰ καὶ τὰ ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος.*—i. 8.

Cic. de. Div. ii.—Erit aliquid quod aut ex nihilo oriatur, aut in nihilum subito occidat: quis hoc physicus dixit unquam?—*Vide Anton.* iv. sect. 4.

ic will allow us, from particular experiments, to establish general conclusions; especially such as concern absolute impossibility of things to be otherwise, than sometimes they appear to be: there may be, for all we can know, agents of another sort, and powers much differing in kind and manner of efficacy from those which are subject to our observation. Especially to suppose the Supreme Being (that made the world) can himself act no otherwise than we see these inferior things do, is grossly vain; nor from any certain principle of reason can it ever appear, that it is impossible some substances should be totally produced *de novo*, or receive an existence which they had not. We cannot derive any such proposition from sense: it assures us that some effects are possible, but cannot help us to determine what is impossible: that which we see done is possible; but what we cannot perceive done is not therefore impossible: nor can any reason of ours reach the extent of all powers and possibilities. That opinion, therefore, of the ancient philosophers, that the matter of the world or of natural things, is eternal and uncreated, had no certain foundation: we may say to them as our Saviour once did to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God*:[b] and that their opinion was indeed false, and contrary to our faith, may appear, 1. Because it is so often generally affirmed in holy scripture, that *God did make all things; all things that are in heaven and in earth*:[c] it is unsafe, and not without great reason ever to be done, to make limitations and restrictions of universal propositions, often (yea constantly) so set down. And like as St. Paul somewhere discourses: Because it is said in the Prophets, *Every one that believeth in him shall not be ashamed; Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*;[d] therefore both Jews and Greeks (in case of belief and calling upon God) are capable of salvation and acceptance, οὐ γάρ ἐστι διαστολή, for that there is no distinction or exception made; so it being said universally and without any limitation, all things were made, therefore the matter of things was also made; the matter being one thing, yea, in the opinion of most philosophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only substantial thing in nature; all other things being only the modes and affections thereof. Whence Aristotle tells us, that most of the first philosophers did affirm nothing to be made, nothing to be destroyed, because matter did always exist and abide the same; as if nothing else in nature had any being considerable.[e] If God, therefore, did not produce matter itself, he could hardly be accounted author of any thing in nature: how then is he truly affirmed the maker of all things?[f]

2. Again; God is in like manner affirmed generally the true possessor and proprietor of all things, excepting none: how so, if he did not make them? is not this expressed the foundation of his right and dominion? *The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world, and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them*:[g] how is God, I say, Lord and owner of matter (at least by the most excellent sort of right), but for that he did produce and doth sustain its being, and therefore may justly use and dispose of it according to his pleasure?* 3. Again; supposing any being eternal, unmade, and independent upon God, doth advance that being in some respect to an equality with God (imparting those great attributes of God thereto), and it deprives him of those perfections, making him to depend upon it in his operations, and not all-sufficient in himself without it: it derogates from his prerogative, and limits his power.† 4. Farther, as Aristotle well discourseth against the ancient philosophers, who, before Anaxagoras, did assign but one principle to things (that material and passive one), as if no active principle were required; so may we argue against him and them together; if God did produce and insert an active principle into nature (as who can well imagine those admirable works of nature

[b] Matt. xxii. 29.
[c] Rom. x. 11, &c.
[d] Rom. x. 11, 13

* —— de re non sua, scilicet non facta ab ipso.—*Tert. adv. Herm.* 9.——De alieno usus, aut precario usus est qua egens ejus, aut injuria qua prevalens ejus.—*Ib.*

† Quis alius Dei census quam æternitas?

[e] Metaph. i. 3; Phys. i. 8.

[f] *Vide* Lactantii libro ii. (p. 179, &c.) disputationem hac de re.

[g] Psal. lxxxix. 11

the seminal propagation and nutrition of plants; the generation, motion, sense, appetite, passion of animals, to be performed by a mere blind agitation of matter, without some active principle distinct from matter, disposing and determining it toward the production of such specific effects?*) if God could, I say, produce such an active principle (such an ἐντελέχεια, to use the philosopher's word), why might he not as well produce a passive one, such as the matter is? 5. Further, if God did produce immaterial beings (simple and uncompounded substances, distinct from all matter), such as angels and the souls of men, merely out of nothing (for out of what pre-existent substance could they be made?) then may he as well create matter out of nothing. What greater difficulty can we conceive in making such a lower imperfect thing, than in making those more excellent beings, so much further, as it were, removed from nonentity? If any thing be producible out of nothing, why not all things capable of existence, by a virtue omnipotent?† But that such immaterial beings were produced by God, we saw before from many plain testimonies of divine revelation. 6. I add, that the manner of God's making the world, delivered in scripture, by mere will and command, (*He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;*[h]) that by only pronouncing the word *fiat*, all things should be formed and constituted in their specific natures and perfections, doth argue that matter might be produced out of nothing by divine power: as also the effecting miracles, contrary to the course of nature (without any preparation or predisposition of the suscipient matter), in the same manner (by saying only, as our Saviour did, Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι, *I will, be thou cleansed;* *Woman, great is thy faith;* Γενηθήτω σοι ὡς θέλεις, *Be it to thee as thou desirest*), doth show the same.[i] For it is nowise harder, nor more impossible, to produce matter itself, than to produce a form therein, without or against its aptitude to receive it: nay, it seems more difficult to make children to Abraham out of stones, than to make them out of nothing:[j] there being a positive obstacle to be removed; here no resistance appearing; there being as well somewhat preceding to be destroyed, as something new to be produced. [Especially, I say, considering that God uses no other means or instruments in these productions, than his bare word and command; which why should we not conceive as able immediately to produce the matter, as the forms of things?] 7. Lastly, the text of Moses, describing the manner and order of the creation, doth insinuate this truth: *In the beginning* (saith he) *God made heaven and earth: now the earth was without form:* first, it seems, God made the matter of heaven and earth, devoid of all form and order, a confused and unshapen mass; then he digested and distinguished its parts; by several degrees raising thence all those various kinds, those well-arrayed hosts of goodly creatures.* From these premises we may conclude (against those philosophers, who, destitute of the light of revelation did conceive otherwise; and against such Christians as have followed them; as Hermogenes, whom Tertullian hath, upon this occasion, writ a discourse against, and some Socinians, Volkeim, &c.) that God did create (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word), produce out of nothing, either immediately or mediately bestow total existence upon every thing that is, not excepting any one; and that this is the true meaning of these words, *Maker of heaven and earth*, which is ascribed here to *God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:*† a

* Veritas sic unum Deum exigit defendendo, ut solius sit quicquid ipsius est.—*Tertull. adv. Hermog.* 4, 5.

Nemo non eget eo, de cujus utitur; nemo non subjicitur ei cujus eget, ut possit uti: et nemo qui præstat de suo uti, non in hoc superior est eo, cui præstat uti.—*Ib.* 8.——Metaph. i. 3.—Nisi quod jam non omnipotens, si non et hoc potens ex nihilo omnia proferre.—*Ib.*

† —— Cur non omnia ex nihilo, si aliquid ex nihilo, nisi si insufficiens fuit divina virtus omnibus producendis quæ aliquid protulerit ex nihilo, &c.—*Tert. adv. Herm.* 13.

[h] Psal. xxxiii. 9.

* Scriptura terram primo factam edicit, dehinc qualitatem ipsius edisserit; sicut et cœlum primo factum professa, dehinc dispositionem ejus superinducit.—*Tertull. contra Hermog.* 26.

† Nihil sine origine, nisi Deus solus.—*Tertull. adv. M. V.* 1; 1 Cor. viii. 6.

[i] Luke v. 13; Matt. xv. 28.—Νεάνισκε, λέγω σοὶ, ἐγέρθητι, Luke vii. 14.

[j] Matt. iii. 9.

truth, which all good Christians have always acknowledged, and the holy scriptures do most plainly avouch (for *to us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we from him; and one Lord Jesus Christ* (his Son), *by whom are all things, and we by him;*) though Marcion of old (and other Gnostical heretics before and after him) did contradict it, affirming that the God who made the world, and enacted the law (whom Moses did declare), was a worse conditioned, a rigid and angry God; but the God of the gospel was another more benign and harmless God, void of all wrath and spleen. [Tertullian thus in verse describes this conceit:—

Prædicat hic duos esse patres, divisaque regna,
Esse mali causam Dominum qui condidit orbem;
Quique figuravit carnem spiramine vivam;
Quique dedit legem, et vatum qui voce locutus;
Hunc negat esse bonum, justum tamen esse fatetur,
Crudelem, durum, belli cui sæva voluptas,
Judicio horrendum, precibus mansuescere nullis.
Esse alium suadens, nulli qui cognitus unquam,
Hunc ait esse bonum, nullum qui judicat, æque
Sed spargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli.]
Adv. Marc. Poem. 1.

Of affinity to this was the error of the Manichees, who supposed two first causes of things, one of *good*, the other of *bad*, taken, it seems, from the Persian, Egyptian, or other Ethnical doctrines, which to this purpose we may see recited by Plutarch, in his tractate *de Iside et Orsiride:* the Persian, from Zoroaster, he tells us, had their Oromazes, and Arimanius; the Egyptians their Osiris and Typhon; the Chaldeans their good and bad planets; the Greeks their Zeus and Hades; the Pythagoreans their *Μονὰς* and *Δυὰς*; Empedocles his Concord and Discord, &c.[k] The common reason or ground upon which erroneous conceits were built was this: that there being in nature some things imperfect and bad, these could not proceed from perfect goodness; it would have produced all things in highest perfection and in indefectible state of goodness. (If, discourseth Plutarch there, expressing the main of their argument, nothing naturally can arise without a cause, and good cannot afford causality to evil, it is necessary that nature should have a proper seed and principle of evil, as well as good:[*] and thus it seems to the most and wisest: for they indeed conceive two Gods, as it were counterplotting each other; one the contriver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better one, *God;* the other, *Dæmon.*)

But this discourse hath two great faults: it supposeth something imperfect and evil, which is not truly so; and that which is truly imperfect and evil it assigneth to a wrong cause: it supposeth some things according to their original constitution imperfect and evil, which is false: there was no creature which did not at first pass the divine approbation; *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.*[l] Good; that is, convenient and suitable to its design, fair and decent in its place and proportion: very good; that is, altogether perfect in its degree, without any blemish or flaw, not liable to any just exception. There be indeed degrees of perfection (it was fit there should be such in great variety, that things might commend and illustrate each other;) some things may comparatively be said to be imperfect, or less excellent in respect of others, but nothing is positively bad or imperfect, void of that perfection due to his nature and kind. Every thing contributes something to the use and ornament of the whole; no weed that grows out of the earth, no worm that creeps upon the ground, but hath its beauty, and yields some profit; nothing is despicable or abominable, though all things not alike admirable and amiable. There is nothing, therefore, unfit or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which doth not in some sort and degree confer to the manifestation of his glorious wisdom, power, and goodness. *O Lord* (saith the devout Psalmist) after particular consideration of them, *how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches:*[m] *He created all things, that they might have their being: and the generations of the world were healthful; and there is no poison of destruction in them,* saith the Hebrew Wise Man.[n]

As for those real imperfections and evils (moral evils, habitual distempers, irregular actions, with all the mischiefs

[*] Εἰ γὰρ οὐδὲν ἀναιτίως πέφυκε γενέσθαι, αἰτίνα δὲ κακοῦ τ' ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἂν παράσχοι, δεῖ γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν, ὥσπερ ἀγαθοῦ, καὶ κακοῦ τὴν φύσιν ἔχειν, &c.

[k] Plut. de Is. et Osir. p. 659, Steph. Gr.

[l] Gen. i. 31.

[m] Psal. civ. 24.

[n] Wisd. i. 14.

consequent on them), we need not seek any one eternal cause for them (though order and uniformity do, disorder and confusion do not, argue any unity of cause whence they should proceed;) the true causes of them are notorious enough: men (or other intellectual agents) their voluntarily declining from the way God doth prescribe them; disobeying his laws and precepts, transgressing the dictates of their own reasons, abusing their own faculties, perverting themselves and others (by their bad example, persuasion, allurement, or violence;) these causes of such evils are most visible and palpable; they are called our ways, our works, our inventions; they are imputed altogether to us; we are blamed, we are punished for them. Nor need we to inquire any other principle of them (no Arminius, no uncreated Cacodæmon, no eternal Fate, to father them upon.)

As for other evils of grief and pain, incident to the nature or consequent upon the actions of any being, they are such as God himself (without any derogation to his goodness) may in his wisdom or justice be author of, for ends sometimes apparent to our understanding, sometimes surpassing its reach;* it may suffice that God challengeth to himself the being cause of them: *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the mouth of the Most High? I am the Lord, and there is none else: I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.*[o] For these evils, therefore, it is in vain to search for any other cause than God's just providence. But I will not trouble you further in considering the mistakes of those blind philosophers or blasphemous heretics.

I will only briefly touch upon a consideration or two (concerning the manner how and the reason why God did make the world) which will commend it to us, and ground somewhat of our duty, and direct our practice in respect thereto. The manner of God's producing the world was altogether voluntary, absolutely free: it did not proceed from him as heat doth from the fire, or light from the sun, by a natural or necessary emanation (as some philosophers have conceited,* some later Platonists, and some Stoics), but from his wise counsel and free choice. (He could have abstained from making the world; he could have made it otherwise.) *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things,* καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημα σοῦ, *and for* (or *by*) *thy will* (or *pleasure*) *they are and were created,* say the elders in the Revelation.[p] It is the property of God, St. Paul tells us, *to perform all things according to the counsel of his will.*[q] He could not be fatally determined, there being no superior cause to constrain him. He could not be obliged to impart any perfection, being master of all, and debtor to none: it would destroy all ground of our thankfulness and devotion, if God was not a free agent. And it is plain, if the world had been produced by necessary emanation, that it should have been eternal; as, if the sun had been eternal, the light had been so. But that the world was produced in time, and that not long since (within five or six thousand years), not only faith and divine chronology assure us, but reason also shows, and all history conspires to make us believe; there being no monuments or probable memory of actions beyond that time; and by what progressions mankind was propagated and dispersed over the world, how and when and where nations were planted, and empires raised, and cities built, and arts invented or improved, it is easy enough to trace near the original times and places. The world therefore, in respect of time conceivable by us, is very young; and not many successions of men's lives have passed between its beginning and ours: whence it is evident that it was freely produced by God. And how he produced it, the scripture further teaches us: not with any laborious care or toil; not with help of any engines or instruments subservient; not by inducing any preparatory dispositions; but ψιλῷ τῷ βούλεσθαι (as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks), by

* Mali nulla natura est, sed amissio boni mali nomen accepit.—*Aug. de Civ. D.* xi. 9; Rom. xi. 33.

[o] Amos iii. 6; Lam. iii. 38; Isa. xlv. 7.

* Non potest aliter facere qui non facit nisi optima. Ipse est necessitas sua.—*Sen. Nat. Qu. Præf. vide* Basil. pag. 10.

[p] Rev. iv. 11.

[q] Eph. i. 11.

his mere will and word; (these were the hands, as Tertullian expounds it, by which it is said *God made the heavens;*[t]) at his call they did all immediately spring up out of nothing; at his command they obediently ranged themselves into order. It was not only a high strain of rhetoric in Moses (as Longinus supposed), but a most proper expression of that incomprehensible efficacy which attends the divine will and decree.[s]

But (since God did not only make the world freely, but wisely, and all wise agents act to some purpose, aim at some end (why did God make the world? it may be asked; what reason induced him thereto? I answer with Plato, ἀγαθὸς ἦν, (*Quæris quid propositum sit Deo? Bonitas: ita certe Plato ait: Quæ Deo faciendi mundum causa fuit? Bonus est, nulla cujusquam boni invidia est:*[t]) He was good: his natural benignity and munificence was the only motive that incited (or invited) him to this great action of imparting existence and suitable perfection to his creatures respectively. No benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him; no accession of beatitude: he did not need any profit or pleasure from without himself, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himself. Our goodness doth not extend to God; we cannot anywise advance or amplify him thereby: *Can a man*, saith Eliphaz (can any creature) *be profitable to God?*[u] No: goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of itself; love is active and fruitful; highest excellence is void of all envy and selfishness and tenacity: these being intrinsical to God's nature (*for God is love;* that is, essentially loving and good), did dispose him to bestow so much of being, beauty, delight, and comfort upon his creatures.[v] Hence, *The earth* (saith the Psalmist) *is full of the goodness of the Lord;*[w] that is, every creature therein is an effect thereof, partakes thereof in its being and enjoyments. *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*[x] (his tender mercies, *rachamavi*, his bowels of affection;) good and tender over all his works, as well in producing them as preserving them; in rendering them at first capable to receive good, as in providing for and dispensing good unto them. *That thou givest them they gather* (it is spoken in respect to the whole university of creatures;) *thou openest thy hand; they are all filled with good:*[y] it is from God's open hand (his immense bounty and liberality) all creatures do receive all that good which fills and satiates them. A glimpse of which truth the ancient heathens seemed to have when they delivered (as Aristotle tells us), that love was the original principle of things [πρώτιστον μὲν ἔρωτα θεῶν μεθίσατο πάντων, is a verse he cites out of Parmenides.[z]]

But I will not insist longer upon this point; only I shall briefly touch some uses the belief and consideration thereof will afford to us.

The belief thereof must necessarily beget in us the highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God and his excellencies. What a power must that be (how unconceivably great, both intensively and extensively!) that could erect so speedily, so easily, such a stupendously vast frame (vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection we can make), the earth we dwell upon, divided into so many great empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion as a little sand to the earth itself, or a drop to the great ocean! What a wisdom must that be (how incomprehensibly large and penetrant), that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures (the artifice that appears in one in the least of which doth so far transcend our conceit), could digest them so fitly, and connect them so firmly in such order! What a goodness and benignity must it be (how immense and boundless) that did extend itself in affection and care for so many creatures, providing abundantly for the needs and comfort of them all! How transcendently glorious is the majesty of him that was author of all those beauties and strengths, those splendours and mag-

[t] Adv. Herm. 45; Psal. cii. 25.
[s] Sect. 7. [t] Sen. Epist. 65.
[u] Psal. xvi. 2; Job xxii. 2.
[v] 1 John iv. 8, 16.
[w] Psal. xxxiii. 5; cxix. 64.
[x] Psal. cxlv. 9.
[y] Psal. civ. 28. [z] Arist. Metaph. i. 4.

nificences, we with so much pleasure and so much astonishment behold! Well might the devout Psalmist and the divine Prophets hence so often take occasion to excite us to praise and celebrate the perfections of God. Well might even heathen philosophers, from the contemplation of the world, be raised unto the composing of hymns and elogies of the great Maker of the world.

It also will confer to the begetting of humble love and affection and gratitude toward God.* What can be more efficacious to this purpose than to consider, that all we have, all we with so much content and pleasure enjoy (ourselves first, then all the accommodations and comforts we find), did proceed from him; did proceed with particular intention from especial good-will toward us; a most free good-will, moved with no merit of ours, no profit to himself: *When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?*[a] was the Psalmist's contemplation: that the author of so great and glorious a work should vouchsafe to regard so mean a thing as we, to visit us with a provident care of our welfare; what a demonstration of admirable condescension, grace, and goodness is this!† what an argument of love and thankfulness toward him! What is man? what, in comparison of him that made the world? What is our strength in respect of his? what our wit, what our goodness, what any quality of ours? How weak, vain, narrow, poor, and wretched creatures, must we needs seem to ourselves, when we seriously consider those excellencies displayed in the creation! How should this humble and depress us in our conceits concerning ourselves, especially if we reflect upon our ingratitude, our unprofitableness, our injustice, toward the Author thereof; how none, or how scant returns we have made to him, who gave to us and all things their being, their all; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our service we have been; how frequently we have opposed his will, and abused his goodness! Further, it is an inducement to trust and hope in God, and a great consolation in all needs and distresses. He that was able to do so great things, and was willing to do so much for us; he that because he made all things can dispose of all, and doth whatever pleaseth him in heaven and earth; shall we distrust or doubt of his protection and succour in our need?[b] *My help* (saith the Psalmist) *cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth:*[c] well might he be assured, having recourse to so potent and faithful an aid: and again, *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God; which made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is.*[d] The prophet Jeremiah begins his prayer thus: *O Lord God, behold thou hast made heaven and earth by thy great power and stretchedout arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.*[e] The creation of the world is such an experiment of God's power and goodness, as may well support our faith in the greatest difficulties and distresses. It is, finally, a general incitement to all obedience, which, from God's production of all things, doth appear due and reasonable. All other things obey the law imposed on them, insist in the course prescribed to them; and shall we only be disobedient and refractory, irregular and exorbitant?[f] shall all the hosts of heaven readily and punctually obey God's summons; shall the pillars of heaven tremble, and be astonished at his reproof; shall the sea, with its proud waves, be confined by his decree;[g] shall fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds (such rude and boisterous things), fulfil his words; and shall we be unruly and rebellious? But I leave the further improvement of this doctrine to your meditation, concluding with that exhortation of the angel in the Revelation: *Fear God and give glory to him; worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water;* even to him be all

* Cogitavit res ante natura, quas fecit.—*Sen. de Benef.* ii. 23.

† Sen de Ira. 27.—Nimis nos suspicimus si digni nobis videmus propter quos tanta moveantur.

[a] Psal. viii. 3.

[b] Dan. iv. 35. [c] Psal. cxxi. 2; cxxiv. 8.
[d] Psal. cxlvi. 5. [e] Jer. xxxii. 17.
[f] Isa. xlviii. 13.
[g] Isa. xl. 26; Job ix. 5; xxvi. 11; xxxviii. 11; Jer. v. 21; Psal. xlviii. 8.

obedience, adoration, and praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*[h]

THE first part of the Creed, concerning *God the Father*, we have largely insisted upon: the next in order (as is fit) succeeds that part thereof which relates to *his ever blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour;* the faith in whom, that is, the believing him to be what he professed himself, what he and his first disciples did teach concerning him, is the principal and peculiar duty of our religion as Christian, and distinct from all other religions; the sum of which doctrine is contained in what follows; wherein our Saviour, the object of this faith, is described and determined unto us, first, by his proper name, *Jesus:* next, by his most notable and comprehensive title, *Christ:* then, by his relations, unto *God* first, *his only Son;* then unto us, *our Lord:* lastly, by several illustrious accidents and circumstances appertaining to him (his *conception, nativity, passion, crucifixion, death, burial, descent into hell, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand:*) which particulars I shall endeavour to prosecute somewhat more briefly.

Jesus.

This name (not unusual among the Jews, for we read of divers in scripture that bear it, who, according to his name, saith Siracides, was great for the saving of God's elect; *Jesus the son of Justus, Jesus the son of Sirach, Bar-Jesus;* and especially the famous *Jesus the son of Nun;*[i] and many others so named occur in Josephus;) this name, I say, was, by God's direction, imposed upon our Saviour at his *circumcision*, for the significancy of it, as importing the performance of that great design for which he was sent into the world, the salvation of mankind from sin and misery;[j] (for it is said, *The son of man came to save the souls of men, and to save that which was lost: That God sent him into the world not to condemn the world; but that the world by him should be saved: That he came into the world to save sinners:*) this is the reason rendered by the angel, of this name being assigned to him: *She shall bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins:*[k] from their sins, taking in all the causes and consequences of them; from all those spiritual enemies which draw or drive us into them; from the guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment, the terror and anguish of conscience, the wrath and displeasure of God following upon them, the slavery under their dominion, the final condemnation and sufferance of grievous pains for them: from all these mischiefs he came to free and save us, and did actually perform his part in accomplishing that salvation; and was therefore properly called *Jesus*, or *the Saviour. To save us from our enemies* (I say), *and from the hands of all that hate us* (so Zechariah in his Benedictus:[l]) from the devil first: *For this purpose* (saith St. John) *the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the devil;*[m] those works of tempting and impelling us to sin: *He went about* (saith St. Peter) *doing benefits, and healing all that were overpowered** (or *overruled*) *by the devil* (possessed by him, whether in body or mind:[n]) *By his death* (the author to the Hebrews tells us) *he did defeat him who had the power of death* (that is) *the devil.*[o] He combated and conquered this strong one (this dreadful and mighty foe of ours), and bound him, and disarmed him of his panoply,† and spoiled‡ all his baggage, leaving him unable (without our own fault, our baseness or negligence) to do us mischief (as is insinuated in Matt. xii. and Luke xi.[p]) Our own fleshly desire, inclining us to vicious excess in sensual enjoyments (another powerful and mischievous enemy of ours), he by his grace (enlightening and strengthening us) doth save us from: *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* (saith St. Paul) *hath freed me from the law of sin and death:*[q] and the world (which often solic-

[h] Rev. xiv. 7.
[i] Eccl. xlvi. 1; Col. iv. 11.
[j] Luke ii. 21.

* καταδυναστευομένους.
† πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ. ‡ σκεύη διαρπάσαι.
[k] Luke ix. 56; Matt. xviii. 11; John iii. 17; xii. 47; 1 Tim. i. 15; Matt. i. 21.
[l] Luke i. 71.
[m] 1 John iii. 8.
[n] Acts x. 38.
[o] Heb. ii. 14.
[p] Matt. xii. 42; Luke xi. 21, 22.
[q] Rom. viii. 2.

its and sometimes would force us to wickedness) he delivers us from, vanquishing it in our behalf: *Be of good courage* (saith he), *for I have overcome the world: In all these things* (in the temptations and persecutions of all our enemies) *we do more than conquer, through Christ that loved us.*[r] As for our conscience, it is the blood of Christ that cleanses it from the stain of guilt, that delivers it from the fear of punishment, as the apostle to the Hebrews doth assure us.[s] And the wrath of God toward us he hath appeased; so that *being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ:* and, *If, being enemies, we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life:*[t] we shall be saved from all condemnation and vengeance due to us; for *there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus—Jesus, that delivers us from the wrath to come* (ὁ ῥυόμενος.)[u] In so many respects is this blessed Person *our Jesus;* saving us from all our enemies, our sins, our miseries; which he performs several ways, and in several respects may therefore be styled *our Saviour.*

1. By his conduct of us into, and in, the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave captains who by their wisdom and valour have freed their people from straits and oppressions. So generally were those judges and captains, who anciently delivered Israel, called: *In the time of their trouble* (said the Levites, in their prayer in Nehemiah), *when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven, and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy:*[v] so particularly are Othniel and Ehud called, and Moses signally: *The same* (saith St. Stephen) *did God send to be* (ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτὴν) *a commander and a saviour* (or *redeemer;*[w]) as he who by his happy conduct did free them from Egyptian slavery.* So is Jesus called ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας (*the Captain of our salvation,* Heb. ii. 10;) ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς (*the Captain of life, the chief Leader of us into the way of eternal life and salvation,* Acts iii. 15;) ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως (*the Captain of our faith,* he that brought us into the belief of that saving doctrine, which is *the power of God to salvation,* Heb. xii. 2; Rom. i. 16;) and these titles we find together attributed to him (Acts v. 31), *Him hath God exalted,* ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, *as a Captain and Saviour.* And thus hath he conducted us first by instruction, showing and teaching us the way of salvation (the doing of which we see often called *saving,* because it hath so much efficacy towards the effecting salvation), God's gracious intentions of mercy towards us, the conditions of duty required by God from us, the great encouragements to saving obedience, and determents from destructive disobedience:[x] the whole will of God, and concernment of man respecting salvation, he hath revealed unto us: *No man hath ever seen God* (not his face or nature, not his purpose and pleasure;) *the only begotten Son, being in the bosom of the Father* (ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο), *he hath reported and expounded him unto us:*[y] all that excellent doctrine, which he that heartily believes and faithfully practices according to, shall infallibly be saved, he was the first author and doctor of: *God saved and called us* (as St. Paul tells us) *with a holy call* (called us out of the way of error and wickedness and misery, into the way of truth and righteousness and happiness), *according to his purpose and grace* (his gracious designs), *that was bestowed upon us in Christ Jesus before the world began;*[z] but being now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.* By him the σωτήριος χάρις (*the grace of God that bringeth salvation*) *did appear unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and piously, in this world.*[a] Neither by his doctrine only, but by his example and real perform-

* Thus Demetrius, by the Athenians, was entitled εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτὴρ: for delivering them from the Macedonian subjection, and restoring to them their liberty.

[r] John xvi. 33; 1 John v. 4; Rom. viii. 37.
[s] Heb. ix. 14; ii. 15. [t] Rom. v. 9, 10.
[u] Rom. viii. 1; 1 Thess. i. 10.
[v] Neh. ix. 27.
[w] Judges iii. 9, 15; Acts vii. 35.

* Ἵνα γένηται πρωτότοκος ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ δδοποιήσῃ τῇ ἀνθρώπου φύσει εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν δδόν.—Gr. Alex.
[x] Rom. xi. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 16; James v. 20. [y] John i. 18.
[z] 2 Tim. i. 9. [a] Tit. ii. 11, 12.

ance, he hath conducted us in the same blessed path: he hath resolutely marched before us though all the most difficult and dangerous passages; charging, beating back, and breaking through all the forces of our enemies; enduring painfully the most furious assaults of the world, and powerfully subduing the most malicious rage of hell. *O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory by our Lord Jesus Christ.*[b] Victory and salvation (from death and hell) we shall be certain of, if we *pursue his steps*, and do not basely or falsely desert so good a Leader: *If with patience we run the race that is set before us, looking unto the Captain and perfecter of our faith, Jesus; who for the joy proposed unto him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*[c] Would it not raise and inflame any courage, to see his commander adventure so boldly upon all dangers, to endure so willingly all hardships?

2. But he was also further (in a more excellent and peculiar manner) our Saviour, in that he purchased for us salvation, freeing us from the captivity we were detained in, from the obnoxiousness to punishment we were subjected to, by yielding himself a ransom for us, offering his life a sacrifice for our sins, procuring by his merit and suffering, in our stead and behalf, the pardon of our sins and reconciliation with God. *Him* (say Peter and the apostles) *hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins.*[d] He gave himself, ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, (a ransom instead of all:) *We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace: He bare himself our sins in his own body upon the tree: He by the eternal Spirit offered up himself a spotless sacrifice to God, being thereby a propitiation for our sins and the sins of the whole world: God by him did reconcile the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their transgressions.*[e] Thus doth the scripture declare Jesus to have been our Saviour: for he not only leads us in the way, but (as a gracious reward of our faithful and constant adherence to him) has given us the promise of eternal joy and happiness.

3. He is, thirdly, our Saviour by communication of spiritual strength and power, whereby we are enabled to resist and overcome the enemies of our soul and our salvation, freeing us from the dominion of sin and Satan. Our own reason, however aided by exterior instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those powerful temptations, oppositions, and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerful Spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us, in all our religious practice and welfare; so that all deliverance from the prevalency of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistance. By our faithful embracing Christ's doctrine and yoke, *our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, so that we henceforth should not serve sin.*[f] Sin shall no longer lord it over us, because we *are not under the law, but under grace: being freed from sin, we are subjected to righteousness, and made servants to God; having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life: The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath freed us from the law of sin and of death.*[g] Thus is Jesus our Saviour.

4. He is so, lastly, by final conferring upon us, and crowning us with salvation. He not only led us in the way, and hath purchased for us the means, and helps us in the prosecution, and hath promised unto us, but will actually bestow upon us (as a gracious reward of our faithful and constant adherence to him), eternal joy and happiness: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give*

[b] 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.
[c] 1 Pet. ii. 21; Heb. xii. 1, 2.
[d] Acts v. 31.

[e] 1 Tim. ii. 6; Matt. xx. 28; Ephes. i. 7; Col. i. 14; *vide* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Heb. ix. 14; 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10, ἱλασμός. ἱλαστήριον, Rom. iii. 25; 2 Cor. v. 19; Col. i. 20.
[f] Rom. vi. 6, 14, 18, 32. [g] Rom. viii. 2.

me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that shall have loved his appearance.[h] *He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*[i] *Thou hast given him* (thou, O Father, to thy Son Jesus hast given) *the power of all flesh, that he should give eternal life to all that thou hast given him;*[j] (that is, to all who by God's grace have persisted in faithful obedience to him.) *The glory which thou hast given me, I have given unto them.*[k] Thus is he the ἀρχηγὸς καὶ τελειωτὴς, the *beginner, carrier on*, and *accomplisher* of our salvation; and therefore most appositely was named *Jesus;* the name which anciently that most valiant and successful captain did bear, who did of all most livelily represent and presignify him, and had therefore questionless by God's secret providence this name assigned him.

I need not now much to mind you what respect, what love, what gratitude the very mention of this name, the consideration of these benefits towards us implied thereby, should beget in us. He that should freely, with great inconvenience to himself, come out of his own way to show us ours, bringing us out of a road tending unto certain destruction, into a most pleasant and safe way, surely leading unto the end of our desires, we should think ourselves much obliged unto: he that should draw us out of a wretched slavery, destitute of all ease, comfort, or hope, by frankly yielding up himself a ransom for us, we could not know how sufficiently to value his kindness towards us: he that, when we were sentenced to death (a death of torment endless and remediless), should not only expose his life for our delivery, but undergo willingly a painful and disgraceful execution in our stead; what should we think of his friendship? what expression could reach it?[l] he, lastly, that from a state of extreme penury, baseness, and disconsolacy, should raise us to the highest pitch of wealth, dignity, and happiness, how could we worthily thank him, how love or honour him enough? This and much more, much more than we can conceive or express, hath Jesus done for us: well, therefore, ought our hearts to melt with affection in thinking of him, our knees to bend with reverence at the mention of his name. It concerns us also to take care that his so excellent endeavours for our salvation be not frustrated; that he be, as well in effect as design and virtue, our Saviour. What a folly were it, what a crime, *to neglect* (to render useless and ineffectual) *so great salvation!*[m]

Christ.

It is a title or name importing office and dignity, the same with *Messias;* this in Greek, that in Hebrew, signifying *The Anointed.*[n] Of ancient times, in the eastern countries (abounding as with good oil, so with many delicate odoriferous spices), it seems, by Hazael's inunction, to have been the manner (it was so, however, among the Jews) to separate (or consecrate) persons (and things too, I might add) designed to great and extraordinary employments, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients;[o] symbolizing (or devoting), it seems, thereby both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts, qualifying them for their employment, and a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them, from the use of things and the performances of persons so sanctified. *Thy name* (saith the Spouse in the Canticles) *is an ointment poured forth;*[p] that is, very delightful and acceptable; and so were those offices hoped to be, to which men by such unction were consecrated. We find especially three sorts of persons to whom this consecration did belong by divine appointment; kings, and priests, and prophets; who are therefore (all of them) styled *God's anointed;* kings and priests more frequently, but sometimes also prophets: *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm;*[q] where *prophets* and *anointed* do seem to denote the same thing, and to expound one the other; for Abraham (whom with the other patriarchs those words do concern) is called a *prophet*, and because so, seems here styled *God's anointed.*[r] Of

[h] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
[i] Heb. vii. 25.
[j] John xvii. 2, 22.
[k] Heb. xii. 2.
[l] John xv. 13.
[m] Heb. ii. 3.
[n] 1 Kings xix. 15.
[o] *Vide* Exod. xxx. 23, &c.
[p] Cant. i. 3; *vide* Psal. cxxxiii.
[q] 1 Chron. xvi. 22.
[r] Gen. xx. 7.

priests (though at first all the sons of Aaron were thus consecrated, according to that law, Exod. xxx. 30), *Thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office;*[s] yet they tell us, that afterward, in all course of times, only the high-priest was so consecrated, whence *the anointed*, or the priest that is anointed, did signify *the high-priest* (in distinction to other inferior priests.[t]) Of *kings;* all that succeeded in the kingdom of Israel, in a legal and orderly course, and those whom God did himself by extraordinary designation confer that dignity upon, were so separated (as Hazael and Jehu.) *Prophets;* we do not find that they were commonly, or according to any rule, *anointed;*[u] but one plain instance we have of Elisha substituted to Elijah in this manner, it seems, as being a prophet more than ordinary, endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater performances than common prophets were.[v] Now whereas the people of the Jews were by prophetical admonitions brought into an opinion and hope, that in times to come God would send an extraordinary prophet; (*I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him;*[w]) a prophet, who should establish a new covenant with the house of Israel, and is therefore called *the messenger of the covenant* (Mal. i. 3), who should propagate the knowledge and worship of God, should enlighten and convert the Gentiles, who should instruct the ignorant, strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted, according to many passages concerning him in the prophets; as for instance, that in Isaiah lxi. 1, cited by St. Luke (Luke iv. 18:) *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted*, &c. and that in the same prophet chap. xlii. 1, alleged by St. Matthew (Matt. xii. 18:) *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: he shall not cry*, &c.: which being inspired, is the qualification of a prophet: and such promulgation of God's will, such ministration of comfort and counsel from God, are the proper offices of a prophet (that is, of an especial minister and agent sent by God to transact his affairs with men, and show them his pleasure.) This Person also the Jews did from the same instructions expect to be a Prince, who should govern them in righteousness and in prosperity; endued with power to deliver them from all oppression and slavery, to subdue their enemies, and reduce all nations under subjection to their laws; according to those predictions: Isa. xxxii. 1, *Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness*, &c.; Psalm cx. 2, *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies:* Jer. xxiii. 5, and xxxiii. 15, *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth; in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely:* and, Jer. xxx. 8, *It shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:*[x] *but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them:*[y] Isa, xi. 1, 10, *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall be upon him*, &c.—*he shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious:*[z] and many more places clearly speak to the same purpose. That this great Person also should be a priest, they did or might have learned from the same prophets; for of him Zechariah thus foretold: *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold the man whose name is The Branch*[a] (a name in so many places appropriated to the Messias;) *and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and*

[s] Exod. xl. 15; xxx. 30.
[t] Lev. iv. 3, 5, 16.
[u] 1 Kings xix. 15.
[v] 1 Kings xix. 16
[w] Deut. xviii. 15, 18.
[x] *Vide* Ezek. xxxiv. 23. &c.; xxxvii. 24.
[y] Hos. iii. 5.
[z] *Vide* Isa. ix. 7; xvi. 5.
[a] Zech. vi. 12.

he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. Of him also David spake: *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*[b] From divers passages also concerning his performances of propitiation and benediction, they might have collected the same. It is no wonder, then, that the ancient Jews (although the text of scripture does not, except once in the 9th of Daniel, apply this name of *Christ* or *Messias* to this Person, so promised and prophesied of) did attribute especially this title to him, it seeming most proper of any, and most comprehensive, implying all the privileges, endowments, and performances belonging to him. It is observed that the Chaldee Paraphrase (composed by the priests, as an interpretation of the less exactly understood ancient Hebrew scripture, for the benefit and instruction of the people) doth expressly mention the Messias in above seventy places; and according to their expositions we see that the people did confidently expect a Person (under this name and notion) should come:[c] *I know*, said the woman of Samaria (so far had this belief extended), *that the Messias comes; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things:*[d] (observe, that they did promise to themselves a full declaration of all truth by the Messias.) And when St. John the Baptist did live and teach in a manner extraordinary, it is said, *That the people did expect, and all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he were the Christ or not:*[e] and when our Saviour's admirable works and discourses had convinced divers, they said, *When Christ cometh, shall he do greater miracles than this man hath done?*[f] So that it is evident the belief and expectation of a Messias to come was general among them. And that indeed Jesus was such, in correspondency to all those prephecies, and the characters in them described and presignified; that he was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all these offices, prophetical, regal, and sacerdotal, the New Testament doth abundantly show us: *Him* (saith St. Peter, in general) *God anointed with the Holy Spirit and power;*[g] not with external affusion of material oil (that did only signify, as Cyrus also was not, who yet is called God's Messias), but with real infusion of divine grace and power, enabling him to execute all those great and extraordinary functions: with this gladsome oil he was thoroughly perfumed and replenished without measure: with this he was sanctified from the womb; when the *power of the Highest did overshadow him*, at or in his conception:[h] with this, at his baptism, he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when the heavens were opened unto him, and the Spirit of God *descended upon him as a dove, and came upon him:*[i] with this, in all the course of his life and ministry, he was continually accompanied; the virtue of it being in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, miraculous and glorious performances for the good and benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed minds, discovered and diffused.[j] He was by this made (in right and in effect) a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest*. 1. A *Prophet:* for they were not mistaken, who (upon our Saviour's admirable raising the widow's child) were *amazed, and glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet was raised up among them*, and that *God had visited his people:*[k] nor the disciples, who called him *a Prophet, mighty in deed and speech before God and all the people;*[l] nor they who confessed (in St. John's Gospel), *This is in truth the Prophet that is come into the world.*[m] An extraordinary commission he had from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by the express testimony of St. John Baptist, by the performance of innumerable great signs and miraculous works (arguments in the highest degree, to utmost possibility, sufficient to assert and confirm it;) he was in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function; by inspiration complete and

[b] Psal. cx. 4.
[c] *Vide* Neh. viii. 8.
[d] John iv. 25.
[e] Luke iii. 15.
[f] John vii. 31.
[g] Acts x. 38.
[h] Psal. xlv. 5.
[i] Luke iv. 1; John iii. 34; Matt. iii. 16.
[j] Acts x. 38.
[k] Luke vii. 16.
[l] Luke xxiv. 19.
[m] John vi. 14.

unlimited, by disposition of mind altogether pure and holy, declared in a continual practice of life void of all sin and guile, by an insuperable courage and constancy, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning goodness and sweetness, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, a most powerful awfulness and majesty expressed in all his demeanour and actions.[n] And suitable to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person was the weight and the extent of his doctrine, concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, the reconciliation of God to the world, the entire will of God and whole duty of man, with all the covenants and conditions, the promises and threatenings relating to our future state; mysteries never before revealed, decrees never to be reversed. He did not (as other prophets have done) prophesy about the constitution of one particular law or religion, the repoof or reformation of one state, the judgment and fate determined to this or that nation; but to the instruction and conversion of all people, the settling of a law universal and perpetual, the final doom of all the world, did his prophetical revelations extend. So was he a Prophet. 2. And a *King* also he is, such as the prophets foretold he should be, who should *raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen*, and *restore the kingdom to Israel*,[o] (Acts i. 6;) that should enact laws, and reduce the nations into subjection to them; should erect a kingdom, and govern it in righteousness, peace, and prosperity, subduing and extirpating all the enemies thereof: [a King, not of this world, though over it; ruling not in external pomp and state, but by secret providence and power; not so much over the bodies and temporal estates, as in the hearts and consciences of men; not chiefly by outward compulsion and violence, but by inward allurement and persuasion:] a King he is indeed over all the world: to the Lamb is to be *ascribed all power and authority by every creature;* he is truly styled *King of kings, and Lord of lords.*[p] God hath advanced him (ὑπερύψωσε), and hath *given him a name* (that is, a title of dignity and authority) *above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, whether of things in heaven, or upon the earth, or under the ground.*[q] Of him in a higher and exacter sense it was said than of Solomon, *All kings fall down before him, all nations do serve him.*[r] All men whatever (all creatures) are his vassals, subject and tributary to him: *All power is given unto him in heaven and earth.* But in especial manner he is King over his church, over that people whom by the sword of his word and prevalent operation of his Spirit he hath subdued to himself (that mystical Sion, built upon the rock of his heavenly grace, and truth, in which it is said God will place his residence, and reign for ever; from whence the law shall go forth, and to which all nations shall flow.[s]) Over this he reigns; having established most righteous and wholesome laws, which his subjects are obliged and enabled by him to obey; protecting them by legislation, by defence and protection, &c. from the invasions and insurrections of their enemies (intestine enemies, their own lusts; outward enemies, the Devil and the world;) supporting them in their distresses and afflictions; also exercising judgment over all; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity; most just though very severe punishments upon obstinate offenders; most royal and liberal rewards to the faithful and obedient: lastly, restraining, defeating, and destroying all the enemies to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual. *Out of his mouth there goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: These mine enemies* (he shall one day say), *which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me: He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*[t] Thus is he a King, endued with sove-

[n] 1 Pet. ii. 22.
[o] Amos ix. 11.
[p] Rev. v. 13; xix. 16; i. 5.
[q] Phil. ii. 9; Eph. i. 21; Col. ii. 10.
[r] Psal. lxxii. 11.
[s] Matt. xxviii. 18; xi. 27; John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2; Psal. cxxxii. 13; Mic. iv. 7, &c.; Isa. iii. 2, &c.
[t] Rev. xix. 15; Psal. ii. 9; Matt. xxv. 31, &c.; Luke xix. 27; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26; *vide* Col. ii. 15.

reign power, and crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all pre-eminences and exercising all functions suitable to regal dignity. 3. He is also a *Priest*, and that no ordinary one: διαφορωτέρας τέτευχε λειτουργίας: he hath *obtained a more excellent function* than any other priest ever had.[u] An oblation he once offered, in worth and efficacy surpassing all the sacrifices and oblations that ever were or could be made (all the fattest hecatombs that were ever sacrificed, all the gold and precious stones that were ever offered,[v] all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled upon the altar, were but vile and sordid, ineffectual and unacceptable, in comparison thereto;[w]) a willing oblation of his own most glorious body (the temple of the Divinity;) of his most precious blood; of his dear life; of himself; his most innocent, most pure, most spotless, and unblemished self, for the propitiation of our sins, and reconciling us to God;[x] an oblation that only could appease God's wrath and merit his favour.

He doth also (which is another sacerdotal performance) intercede for the pardon of our sins: *If any man sin, we have an advocate with* (or *to*) *the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;*[y] for the acceptance of our services, for the granting our requests, for grace and assistance, comfort and reward, and all spiritual advantages to be conferred upon us;[z] thus pursuing the work of salvation by his propitiatory sacrifice begun for us: *Whence* (as the apostle saith) *he is able to save to the uttermost those that by him come unto God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*[a] It is the duty also of a priest to mediate between God and man by atonement and intercession; so is he.[b]

He doth further, as a priest, perform the office of blessing; blessing the people in God's name, blessing God in the people's behalf;[c] as did that illustrious type of him, Melchizedek: (*Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.*[d]) So hath Jesus effectually pronounced all joy and happiness to his faithful people; he pronounced blessedness in his sermons; he blessed his disciples at his parting: *And God* (as St. Peter tells us) *having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning away every one of us from his iniquity;*[e] and at the last day he will utter that comfortable benediction: *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;*[f] as the Prophet and Doctor, as the sovereign King and Prince, as the High-Priest and Advocate of his church. So in all respects is Jesus a true and perfect Priest; and so, finally, in all respects, is he God's *anointed*, the *Christ* of God: and indeed, that he is so, is the fundamental point of our religion; which the apostles did testify, and preach, and labour to persuade the world of; the sincere belief of which doth constitute and denominate us Christians; the consideration of which may serve to beget in us a practice answerable to our relations grounded thereupon. If he be such a Prophet, we must with attention and a docile mind hearken to his admonitons and instructions; we must yield a steady belief to his doctrine; we must readily practice what he teaches us. If he be our King, we must perform all due allegiance to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs. If he be our Priest, we must apply ourselves to him for, and rely upon, his spiritual ministries in our behalf, sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by his sacrifice, the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession, all spiritual comfort, joy, and felicity, in consequence upon his efficacious benediction: *Having* (it is the Apostle to the Hebrews his admonition) *a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.*[g] In a word, if Jesus be Christ, let us be Christians; Christians, not in name only, in

[u] Heb. viii. 6.
[v] 1 Pet. i. 18. [w] Heb. ix. 9; x. 5.
[x] John x. 16; Eph. v. 2; Heb. vii. 27, 26.
[y] 1 John ii. 1. [z] *Vide* Heb. v. 7.
[a] Heb. vii. 25; Numb. vi. 23.
[b] 1 Tim. ii. 5.
[c] 1 Chron. xxiii. 13; Levit. ix. 22, 23.
[d] Gen. xiv. 19, 20.
[e] Luke xxiv. 50; Acts iii. 26; *vide* Eph. i. 3.
[f] Matt. xxv. 34. [g] Heb. x. 21, 22.

outward profession, in our opinion; but in very deed and reality; in our heart, in our affection, in our practice. *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (that confesseth him to be so) *depart from iniquity.*[h]

His only Son.

That the Messias designed by God to come for the restoring of the church and reformation of the world, was in especial manner to be the Son of God, seems to have been the common persuasion of the ancient Jews before our Saviour's appearance; as may be collected from divers expressions then used, wherein being the Christ, and being the Son of God, are conjoined as inseparable adjuncts of the same Person: as in the confessions of Nathanael, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel:*[i] of Martha, *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world:*[j] of St. Peter, *We have believed and have known that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:*[k] and especially by that examination of the high-priest, *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.*[l] And that our Saviour was indeed so, the New Testament doth every where teach us; calling him not only at large *the Son of God*, but his μονογενὴς (his *only begotten Son;*) his ἀγαπητὸς (his *darling Son;*) his πρωτότοκος (his *first-born;*) his ἴδιος υἱὸς (his *proper* and *peculiar Son:*) those epithets all implying somewhat of peculiar eminency in the kind and ground of this relation. Adam is called *the Son of God;* and the angels are so entitled;[m] and princes are somewhere styled *the children of the Most High;*[n] and all men, especially all good men, yea all things, have God, in some sense, their Father: but all these in a manner (if we compare them with Christ's relation) are improper and inferior; for he is the *only Son* (or the *only begotten Son*) of God. Now we find indeed several reasons and respects for which he is called the Son of God: he is so in regard of his temporal generation, by the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin Mary; so the angel doth expressly tell us, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God:*[o] a generation so wonderful and peculiar, without intervention of any Father but God, is one ground of this relation and title. He is also capable of this title by reason of that high office, the which by God's special designation and appointment he was instated in. If ordinary princes and judges (as being deputed by God to represent himself in dipensation of justice, as resembling him in exercise of power and authority) have been called *gods*, and *the children of the Most High*, in the holy scripture itself,[p] with how much greater reason and truth may he (whom, God hath sanctified and sent into the world, hath consecrated and commissionated to the most eminent and extraordinary office) be so called! It is our Saviour's own argumentation. He is also, in regard of his resurrection by the divine power (which is a kind of generation or a regeneration to another immortal life), so styled: if others are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection, how much more he, who is *the first-born from the dead!*[q] And that of the Psalmist concernig Christ, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, according to St. Paul's exposition, was fulfilled by God's raising Jesus (Acts xiii. 33) again. Whereas it is said, that God did appoint or make our Saviour *heir of all things;* did *put all things under his feet;* did *give him power over all flesh;* did *commit to him all authority in heaven and upon the earth, having set him at his right hand;* hath exalted him to the next place of authority and dignity to himself (*the right hand of the Majesty in the highest;*[r]) and given him *a name above every name;* well may he in this respect be entitled *the Son of God*, as having obtained the rank and privilege proper to this relation[s] (*If a son, then*

[h] 2 Tim. ii. 19.
[i] John. i. 49.
[j] John xi. 27.
[k] John vi. 69.
[l] Matt. xxvi. 63; Mark xiv 61.
[m] Luke iii. ult.
[n] Psal. lxxxii. 6.
[o] Luke i. 35; *vide* Gal. iv. 4.
[p] Psal. lxxxii. 6; John x. 34.
[q] Luke xx. 36; Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5; Acts xiii. 32, 33.
[r] Heb. i. 2; Eph. i. 22; John xvii. 1, 2; Matt xxviii. 18; Acts ii. 33.
[s] Heb. i. 3; Phil. ii. 9; Eph. i. 20, 21.

an heir, St. Paul argues; and reciprocally, if constituted *heir of all*, then in that regard *a son*, Rom. viii. 17.) In such respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly, styled *the Son of God*. But his being so expressly called God's *only begotten Son* doth imply a ground more peculiar and more excellent (than any of these) of this relation, (as do also those especial prerogatives of affection and favour from God appropriated to him, with all the glorious preferment consequent thence, argue the same.) For the first Adam also derived his being immediately from God's power and divine inspiration; Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist, had a generation extraordinary and miraculous (as being born of aged fathers or barren mothers, by the interposition of divine power;) and we cannot easily conceive how the production of angels should be so much inferior to our Saviour's temporal generation (supposing he had no other.) And our Saviour, though he were the first and chief, yet was not the only son of the resurrection; nor doth the arbitrary collation of power and dignity, how eminent soever, seem to suffice: for we see others, in regard to their designment and deputation to offices of power and trust (though subordinate and inferior to him), entitled *the sons of God* (beside, that this is ground of a metaphorical rather than a natural and proper sonship:) and though our Saviour be *the heir of all things*, yet hath he *coheirs*:[t] whom, as St. Paul speaks, *God hath together enlivened, and together raised, and together seated with him in thrones of glory and bliss.*[u] In these respects God hath *many sons* (as the author to the Hebrews tells us), and our Saviour *many brethren* (as it is in Romans viii.[v]) We should therefore seek a more excellent and proper foundation of this only sonship; and such we may deduce from the testimony of divine writ. It is evident thence that our Saviour had an existence before his temporal generation;[w] for he did descend from heaven, and was there before he did descend (his ascension was but a returning thither, whence he had descended at his incarnation;) he was before St. John the Baptist; and therefore, as St. John confesses, was worthily preferred before him.[x] Before Abraham was born, he did subsist (and therefore might without any absurdity affirm, that Abraham and he did see each other, might have intercourse together, as his own discourse with the Jews doth declare:) nay further, it is plain he was of standing, and had a glory before the world had a being; for he prays thus: *And now Father, glorify me with thyself with the glory which I had before the world was with thee.*[y] (glory; that is, a most honourable state of being and excellent perfection was not only designed him, but he really had it before the world was:) and needs must it be so; for *by him God made the world;* and himself made it: *By him* (saith St. Paul) *were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whither they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*[z] (He did not only create anew and reform mankind, but he created all things; and among them all degrees of angels, all things in heaven; such things as the new metaphorical creation did not extend unto.) *All things were made by him* (or did exist by him), *and without him there was not any thing made which was made,*[a] saith St. John: (and what could be said more expressly or clearly?) In fine, he did exist from all eternity: πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, that is, born before all the creation: as, *In the beginning was the Word:*[b] in the beginning; that is, before any point of time designable or conceivable; that is, from eternity: whence he is truly styled, *the first and the last* (ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος), and *Alpha* and *Omega*, several times in St. John's Revelation (a phrase by which God's eternity and immortality are usually expressed.) He had therefore a being before his temporal generation, and that before all creatures, even from eternity: therefore that being was divine:[c] if no creature, if author of all creatures,

[t] Rom. viii. 17. [u] Eph. ii. 5, 6.
[v] Heb. ii. 10; Rom. viii. 29.
[w] John iii. 13; vi. 62.
[x] John i. 15; viii. 58. [y] John xvii. 5.
[z] Heb. i. 2; Col. i. 16, 17; Eph. iii. 9.
[a] John i. 3, 10. [b] John i. 1.
[c] Rev. i. 17; ii. 8; xxii. 13.
[d] Isa. xlii. 4; xlviii. 12; xliv. 6; Rev. i. 8.

if eternally subsistent, then God: that action is proper, that attribute is peculiar, to God; only God can be the Creator of all things: (he that built all things is God; none but God can be eternal; *he only hath immortality*, and only therefore hath eternity:[e]) he is consequently said, before he did assume the *form of a servant, and became like unto men*, to have subsisted in *the form of God, and not to have deemed it robbery to be equal*, (or in equality) *to God*;[f] so that as he was after his incarnation truly man, partaker of man's nature and properties, so before it he was truly God, partaker of the divine essence and attributes;) and therefore he is frequently in the scriptures called *God* (in the most proper and highest sense:[g]) *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* God is said to have been *manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed into glory*;[h] (of which positions it is evident that the subject is Christ; he is therefore called *God.*) God is also said, by St. Paul, to *have purchased his church with his own blood*;[i] who else did that but Christ? *My Lord and my God*,[j] so St. Thomas expressed his faith in Christ (upon his conviction), which our Saviour accepts and approves as a proper testimony thereof. Also: *We are* (saith St. John) *in the true one* (the God of truth), *in his Son Jesus Christ.*[k] Thus he is the true God, and life eternal (no false, no metaphorical God, but the very true, supreme, everliving God;) *out of whom* (saith St. Paul), *as concerning the flesh* (according to his humanity), *Christ came who is over all, God blessed for ever* (ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς), *the God over all, the supreme God, the Most High: God blessed for ever*; the ὁ εὐλογητὸς, *the blessed one* (which is a special and characteristical attribute or title of God.[l]) Now this proper appellation, with the majesty and worship due thereto, as also the title of Lord and King, *King of kings, and Lord of Lords*,[m] with the reverence and authority attending them; likewise the most divine works of creation and providence, and judging the world; immediate working of miracles, remitting of sins; the divine attributes of wise, good, powerful, absolutely and perfectly; in a word, all things that the Father hath (according to what our Saviour affirmed (*All things that the Father hath are mine*;[n] we cannot imagine that God, who is so jealous of his honour (who *will not give his glory to another*), would communicate to any creature, how eminent soever in nature (for the highest creature possible must however be infinitely distant from, infinitely inferior to, himself in perfection and dignity; nor can any be capable of it in nature, or in reason and justice accept such names, such characters, such prerogatives.) Now our Saviour being thus God, and the whole tenor of our religion (with testimonies of scripture frequent and obvious) asserting but one God, therefore our Saviour hath the same essence with God; and it must be necessarily true what himself affirms, *I and the Father are one* (John x. 30.) Yet hath he not this essence of himself, but by communication;[o] for *as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself* (John v. 26.) He is the *image of the invisible God* (an image most perfectly like, because having the very same nature), an effulgency of his glory, and a character (or perfect impression) of his substance;[p] and this eternal communication of the same divine essence is that generation, in respect of which he is most properly and truly the only begotten Son of God. If to produce a being like (in any kind or degree) be to generate; to impart a being without any dissimilitude or disparity at all, perfectly the same, is the most proper generation: and that none other (beside our Saviour) was so begotten, in any manner like or comparable to this, is evident enough; for that as no reason could have taught us that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath showed us that any other was. By creation, things receive a being from God infinitely different, unlike, and unequal to the being of God; and that filia-

[e] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [f] Heb. iii. 4; Phil. ii. 6, 7.
[g] *Vide* Rom. viii. 33; John i. 1.
[h] 1 Tim. iii. 16. [i] Acts xx. 28.
[j] John xx. 28. [k] 1 John v. 20.
[l] Rom. ix. 5; Mark xiv. 61.
[m] 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[n] John xvi. 15.
[o] Col. i. 15. [p] Heb. i. 3.

tion which is grounded upon adoption and grace is wholly diverse from this: and the communication of the divine essence to the Holy Ghost doth so differ in manner from this (though the manner be incomprehensible to us), that it is never called *generation* in scripture, and therefore we must not presume it to be so. But so much for explication of the point. For application briefly: The consideration of this point will serve to instruct and confirm our faith concerning the mystery of our redemption; to direct and heighten our devotion; to raise in us a due gratitude toward God; to beget hope and comfort in us.

1. We may first hence learn whence the undertaking of Christ (his performances and his sufferings for us) become of so great worth and efficacy. It is no wonder that God's only Son's mediation should be so acceptable and effectual with God; that his blood should be so precious in God's sight, and his intercession so prevalent with him.[q] What could God deny his own Son, *the Son of his love*, so earnestly entreating, in our behalf? What debts might not so rich a price discharge? What anger could not so dear a sacrifice appease?[r] What justice should so full a compensation not satisfy? We were *not redeemed with gold*;[s] all the Indies had not been able to ransom a soul; all the hecatombs in the world cannot satisfy for a pecadillo. Well might a person so infinitely worthy and excellent be a sufficient ransom for whole worlds of miserable offenders and captives; well might his voluntary suffering a bitter and disgraceful death countervail the deserved punishment of all mankind, if our displeasing and dishonouring a Person so great, so good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and dignity of the Person submitting in our behalf to justice and performance of satisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation, and countervail the injury done.[t] Well, therefore, may we believe and say with the apostle, *Who shall criminate against the elect of God? It is God that justifieth*,[u] (the Son of God, as himself God, that satisfies justice for us:) *Who is there that condemns? It is Christ that hath died for us.*

2. We learn what reverence and adoration is due to our Saviour; and why we must *honour the Son, even as we honour the Father*,[v] (as himself hath taught us to do.) Whence it is, that, in St. John's Revelation, every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, did (and ought to) say, *Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever* (ascribing the same pre-eminency, and paying the same veneration, jointly to God Almighty, and to the Lamb his blessed Son;) why, not we men only, (whom he hath particularly purchased and redeemed), but even *all things in heaven and earth, and beneath the earth*, must bend the knee (yield worship and observance) to him;[w] when the *first begotten is brought into the world*, it is said, *Let all the angels of God worship him.*[x] We are (we see) obliged to ascribe divine glory, to yield divine adoration, to Christ: Why? Because he is the *only Son of God*, equal in majesty, one in essence with him. Were he not so, it were injury to God, and sacrilege, to do it: God would not *impart his glory*, we should not *yield it to another.*[y]

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God unto us, and our obligation to love, and answerable thankfulness toward him. *God commendeth his love toward us* (saith St. Paul) *in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*[z] *In this* (saith St. John) *was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*[a] *In this is love* (love indeed, admirable and inconceivable), *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten Son to be a propitiation for our sins.* Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, of goodness, as for a Prince (himself perfectly glorious and happy) freely to deliver up his own only most dearly beloved Son (out

[q] 1 John i. 7; Heb. ix. 14.
[r] Col. i. 13,—Υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ.
[s] 1 Per. i. 18.
[t] Psal. xlix. 7.
[u] Rom. viii. 33.
[v] John. v. 23.
[w] Phil. ii. 9.
[x] Heb. i. 6.
[y] Isa. xlii. 8.
[z] Rom. v. 8.
[a] 1 John iv. 9, 10.

from his bosom of glory and bliss), to suffer most base contumelies, most grievous torments, for the welfare of his declared enemies, traitors, and rebels? Such hath been God's goodness to us, suitable thereto should our gratitude be toward him.

4. This consideration fitly serves to beget in us hope in God upon all occasions of our need or distress; as also comfort in all our afflictions. *He hath so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son* for its salvation and happiness; how can he be supposed unwilling to bestow whatever else shall appear needful or beneficial for us? He that parted with a jewel so inestimable in charity and pity toward us, to him no other thing can seem much to give us: it is St. Paul's consolatory discourse, *He that did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?*[c] [All things that we need, that we can reasonably desire, that will be good and fit for us.]

5. I might add the use which St. John (1 John iv. 11) makes of this consideration: *Beloved* (saith he) *if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another:* if God so lovingly gave up his only Son for us, what (in respect, in gratitude, in imitation of him) what expressions, I say, of charity and good-will, ought we to yield toward our brethren! What endeavours, what goods, what life of ours, should be too dear for us to impart for their good! So much for this point. It follows,

Our Lord.

As the name of *God* is by a mysterious kind of peculiarity attributed to the *Father* so is the name of *Lord* to the *Son;* who is sometimes called absolutely *the Lord* (or *the Lord Jesus*), sometimes *our Lord;* to acknowledge and call him so, being the special duty and character of a Christian: *There be* (saith St. Paul, there be, according to popular or worldly use) *gods many, and lords many, but to us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ;*[d] and, *One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all things*[e] (are by us Christians professed:) and, *No man can call Jesus Lord* (that is, cordially embrace Christianity), *but by the Holy Ghost.*[f] The reason of which peculiar appellation may be, because, beside that natural dominion over us appertaining to Christ as our God and Maker, that title is in several other respects, and upon other grounds, due to him. In what notion soever we take *lord*, as a governor over subjects, as a master over servants, as an owner of goods, as a master of disciples, as a leader of followers, he is, according to all such notions, *our Lord:* consider him in whatever respect or capacity, as God, as man, as Θεάνθρωπος (God and man united; as Jesus, as Christ), he is our Lord. Examine all foundations imaginable of just dominion: eminence of nature, of power, derivation of being, with the preservation and maintenance thereof; donation, acquisition, desert, purchase, redemption, conquest, compact, and resignation of ourselves; upon them all his right of Lordship over us is justly grounded. As God he is our Lord: endued with supreme authority and irresistible power, also hath made all things, and upholds all things; and therefore all things are subject to his disposal (to be governed, and possessed, and used according to his pleasure;) hence that most peculiar and august name of God, *Jehovah* (denoting either independency and indefectibility in subsistence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in action; both together; and therefore fitly rendered Κύριος, by the Seventy interpreters, and *Lord* by our translators), is attributed to him: *This is his name* (saith the prophet) *whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness;** and what is in the Old Testament spoken of *Jehovah*, is in the New Testament by infallible exposition applied to him: as, for instance, what Malachi did foretell concerning Elias, *that he should prepare the way of Jehovah,*[g] was verified in St. John Baptist's preparing the way to our Saviour. As man also, God did confer upon him lordship; a power and authority of ruling and judging;[h] of remitting offences; and

[b] John iii. 16.
[c] Rom. viii. 32.
[d] 1 Cor. viii. 6.
[e] Eph. iv. 5, 6.

* For κύριον doth signify *to subsist;* and κύρος, *efficacy, ratification, power* or *authority*—Jer. xxiii. 6.

[f] 1 Cor. xii. 3; Phil. ii. 11.
[g] Mal. iii. 1.
[h] Matt. iii. 3; Luke i. 76; John v. 27.

punishing and rewarding: the Father hath given him authority even to execute judgment, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστὶν, *because* (or whereas) *he is the Son of man:* and, *Let all the house of Israel* (saith St. Peter) *know assurdly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ* (even) *this Jesus, whom you did crucify:*[i] and, *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and reward every man according to his works:*[j] and, *Being found in shape as a man, he humbled himself* (saith St. Paul) *becoming obedient unto death, the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him—that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord:*[k] and again, *To this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living:*[l] and, *God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church: Thou hast given him power over all flesh.*[m] Thus hath God in him performed more signally and eminently what the Psalmist thankfully acknowledges and praises him for in regard to man: *Thou crownedst him with glory and honour; and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.*[n] As God-man he is also Lord, and Lord of lords; whatever naturally did belong to God; whatever freely was conferred on man (by way of gift or reward), did accrue to the Person, and was consequent upon the union hypostatical; so that, in this respect, Christ is eternally Lord; *Lord* indeed *of all*, as St. Peter styles him, *having all things* (excepting God himself, as St. Paul teaches us) *put under his feet;*[o] but particularly (which most concerns us to acknowledge and consider) *our Lord;* and that upon several grounds, which it will be convenient briefly to touch. An entire power over us, and a perfect ability to govern us, he hath; in which respects it is both necessary to submit to him, and reasonable willingly to admit him as our Lord: (persons so qualified, Aristotle himself in his Politics tells us, have a natural title to dominion; as on the contrary, persons weak, or unwise, unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things to their own good, are naturally subjects and servants.) Also, he hath made us, and he preserves us; all we are or have is wholly derived from and depends upon him; whence he hath an absolute right to dispose of and use us according to his discretion and pleasure. He is the Son of God, is heir-apparent, and natural Lord of all things; and so our Lord, by birth and privilege of nature. But further: he hath also acquired us to himself (adding a legal to a natural right;) we are called περιποίησις (an acquist made by him; and λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν (a people appertaining to, or by, acquisition.[p]) Divers ways hath Christ acquired us: by donation from God: *Whom thou hast given me* (saith he to his Father) *I have kept:*[q] and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.*[r] So we fall under by conquest; conquest over his enemies; conquest over ourselves, being his enemies: we were (partly by violence, partly by consent) enslaved to his enemies, and lived in obedience to them: them hath Christ quite vanquished and subdued (having *spoiled* (ἀπεκδυσάμενος) *those principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them;*[s]) and so we rightfully fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory, and formerly belonging to his enemies: yea, ourselves, being, as St. Paul speaks, ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, enemies in our mind and discourse (discovering our enmity by wicked, disobedient, and rebellious practices), did he subdue by the power of his word and Spirit;[t] whence, as it is in the Benedictus, *being delivered out of the hand of our enemies* (his enemies and

[i] Acts ii. 36.
[j] Matt. xvi. 27.
[k] Phil. ii. 8; *vide* Matt. ix. 2, 6; *vide* Acts x. 42.
[l] Rom. xiv. 9.
[m] Eph. i. 20, 21, 22; John xvii. 2.
[n] Psal. viii. 5, 6; Heb. ii. 7, 8.
[o] Acts x. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 27.
[p] Eph. i. 14.
[q] John xvii. 12; vi. 39; xvii. 6.
[r] Eph. ii. 2, 3, &c.
[s] Col. ii. 15.
[t] Col. i. 21.

ours in truth and effect), *we* may, we *should serve him without fear*:[u] being *servati*, we become *servi*; being *subacti*, we are *subditi*. He might have justly destroyed us, deprived us of liberty and life, as dependents upon and partizans of his enemies; as ourselves being in actual hostility against him; but seeing he hath saved us, we thereby become his vassals. But, further, he hath purchased us: he hath delivered up himself a ransom and a price for us: and so hath acquired us, hath redeemed us: hath bought us with his own blood:[v] we having forfeited our lives to God's law, and being sentenced to a miserable death; he procured our redemption by himself undergoing equivalent punishment, discharging our debt, and satisfying the divine justice for us: whence, as St. Paul argues, *we are not our own; for we were bought with a price*;[w] we are his who saved our lives, freed us from captivity, drew us out of extreme and endless misery; ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες, *that we (now) living, should not henceforth live to ourselves, but to him that died for us, and rose again*:[x] in requital for mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we cannot (not in gratitude only, but in justice) owe less than ourselves; ourselves to be rendered wholly into his dominion and disposal. He hath also acquired lordship over us, by desert and as a reward agreeable to his performances, of obedience and patience highly satisfactory and acceptable to God:[y] *He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the cross: therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name*;[z] *To this end Christ both died, rose, and revived*, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ, *that he might exercise lordship over both the dead and living*:[a] *He drank of the brook in the way: therefore he hath lift up his head: Therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death*:[b] *And we see Jesus* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews) *for his sufferance of death, crowned with glory and honour*.[c] I may add, that he hath acquired a right and title over us, as our continual benefactor, by the benefits he bestows, and the hire he pays us: he affords us sure protection, liberal maintenance, ample wages (great privileges under rich rewards) for our service: *Knowing* (saith St. Paul) *that ye shall* (in regard to your obedience) *receive* τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν κληρονομίας (*the recompense of an inheritance*:) *for ye serve the Lord Christ*.[d] It is no Egyptian bondage that he detains us under; requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompense; but a most beneficial and fruitful service. *Doth Job fear God for nought?* the Devil could not but observe and envy the benefits and blessings the pious man received in regard of his faithful service.[e] Christ hath promised to withhold no good thing from his servants;[f] nothing necessary for the support or comfort even of this temporal life; but especially most inestimably precious recompenses he will bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings: *He will render to every man according to his works: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life*:[g] and, *Being freed from sin, and made servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification; and in the end everlasting life*:[h] [a fruit to sanctification (all benefits conducing to our spiritual welfare here), and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happiness:] to them who have been diligent and faithful in performing their tasks, and improving the talents committed to them for his interest, he will one day say, *Euge, bone serve, Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into thy Master's joy: Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake: rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great shall your reward be in heaven*.[i] And he that is at such care and charges for us; who feeds and furnishes us so plentifully; who rewards our small pains,

[u] Luke i. 74.
[v] Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. i. 18; 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23.
[w] 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.
[x] 2 Cor. v. 15.
[y] Eph. i. 20.
[z] Phil. ii. 8.
[a] Rom. xiv. 9; *vide* John x. 17.
[b] Psal. cx. 7; Isa. liii. 21.
[c] Heb. ii. 9.
[d] Col. iii. 24.
[e] Job. i. 9; *vide* 1 Cor. iii. 8; Psal. lxxxiv. 11.
[f] Matt. vi. 33.
[g] Rom. ii. 6; Col. iii. 24.
[h] Rom. vi. 22.
[i] Matt. xxv. 21, &c.; Μισθὸς τοῖς δούλοις σου. —Rev. xi. 18; Matt. v. 11, 12.

our poor works, our improfitable services, with so high and bountiful wages; him sure most justly we should esteem, most willingly call, our good Lord and Master.

But yet further, he is not only our Lord by nature, by acquisition, by manifold deserts and performances of his; but by our deeds also, by most formal and solemn, most free and voluntary, and therefore most obligatory, acts of ours: he is our Lord and King by election: finding ourselves oppressed by our cruel enemies (groaning under intolerable slaveries to sin and Satan), we had recourse to him upon his gracious invitation, offering us ease and refreshment under his most gentle and equal government: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: take my yoke upon you—for my yoke is easy, and my burden light.*[j] So he invited us; and so we did (or did at least pretend to) undergo his yoke, and freely submit to his government: we vowed allegiance and fealty to him, as our lawful prince; promised subjection to his will, and obedience to his laws; engaged (forsaking all things) to follow him, and fight under his banners against the common enemies of his glory and our salvation: we contracted with him, upon certain conditions and considerations (most advantageous to ourselves), to be his obedient and faithful servants;* not only renouncing all other masters, but resigning up all pretence to liberty, or power over ourselves; becoming absolutely subject to his will and command: this we did at our baptism in most express and solemn manner: and in every religious performance we confirm our obligation; by acknowledging his right over us, and our duty toward him; by imploring his princely protection, and succour, and mercy upon us; and by promising our humble respect and obedience toward him. Upon so many grounds is Jesus Christ the Son of God our Lord. The general influence of which doctrine upon our practice is very obvious and palpable.

1. If we do truly believe Christ our Lord, we must conceive ourselves obliged to observe and submit to his will; to attend unto and obey his law: *Why call you me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*[k] It is a vain and absurd profession (an irrational and illusive pretence) we make, when we confess and invoke him as our Lord, and disavow his authority in our practice: *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*[l] (shall obtain the reward assigned to a faithful servant; but he that really performs the duty of one; that does the will of God.) *Do ye not know* (saith St. Paul) *that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey?*[m] We forfeit all pretence to the very name (as well as to the rewards and privileges) of Christ's servants, if we disobey his commands; being really servants to the lusts which sway us; to the devil, whose suggestions and pleasure we comply with. We do but usurp the name of Christians, if our practice be not conformable to the laws of Christ.

2. If Christ be our Lord, then are we not our own lords, not our own men; and therefore must not think to have our own will and do our own business; please our own appetites, or gratify our desires; except in subordination and reference to his service: *We are not our own* (saith St. Paul;) *for we are bought with a price:*[n] (we are by nature, by manifold acquisition, by free choice and compact, his:) *For this end Christ died* (and performed all for us), *that they which live, may not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died and rose again for them:*[o] *Whether we live, or whether we die* (whatever actions we undertake, relating either to life or death), *we are the Lord's,*[p] and should direct all to his glory, his profit, his service.

3. If Christ be our Lord (absolutely our Lord), then can we have no other lords;[q] none in opposition to, none in competition with him; none but in subserviency and respect to him: *No man* (our Saviour tells us) *can serve two lords*[r] (with collateral and equal observance.) Serving riches, or honours, or pleasures, is inconsistent with our duty to Christ: *He that doth not forsake all that he hath, cannot be his disciple, or servant.* (Luke

* Συμφωνήσας μετὰ τῶν ἐργατῶν.—Matt. xx. 2.
[j] Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30.
[k] Luke vi. 46.
[l] Matt. vii. 21.
[m] Rom. vi. 16.
[n] 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.
[o] 2 Cor. v. 15.
[p] Rom. xiv. 8.
[q] *Vide* John xiii. 13.
[r] Matt. vi. 26.

xiv. 33.) Nor can we therefore please and humour men; obeying any command, or complying with any desire, or following any custom of theirs, contrary to Christ's will and precept: *If I did yet please* (or soothe) *men* (saith St. Paul), *I were not the servant of Christ:*[s] *Ye are bought with a price; be not* (or, you are not) *the servants of men;*[t] that is, do not (or ye ought not to) perform service with ultimate relation to men, but out of conscience to Christ, as his servants. We may, we are bound to obey men humbly, and willingly, and diligently, and faithfully, in our stations, and according to our conditions, as subjects or servants; but this in subordination to our supreme and principal Lord: *Servants* (saith St. Paul), *obey your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling* (that is, humbly and respectfully), *in singleness of heart, as to Christ;*[u] *not in eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good-will, as to the Lord, and not to men: Yea, whatsoever* (saith the same wise instructor) *ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompense of inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*[v]

4. It is, we see (which may be another use of this point), not only an engagement, but an encouragement, to the performance of all duty, particularly to those hard duties of cheerful obedience and submission to men (who are sometimes, as St. Peter intimates to us, σκολιοὶ, somewhat untoward and harsh in their dealings with their servants), that therein do we serve a most equal and gentle Master, who will graciously accept our service, and abundantly requite it;[w] a Lord, that will not suffer his servants to want any needful sustenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection or assistance; who will not only faithfully pay them their promised allowance, but raise them to the highest preferment imaginable. It is a great comfort also for a Christian (how mean soever he be in this world) to consider this relation of his; how great, how good a master he doth serve; that the greatest princes, that the highest angels, are his fellow-servants; yet that his gracious Lord will not despise or neglect him. St. Paul also makes use or this consideration to press upon superiors their duties toward their inferiors;[x] their duties of equity, meekness, kindness, mercy, pity, and all humanity: *Masters* (saith he), *yield unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven:*[y] *And, ye masters, do the same things to them* (to your servants), *forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; and there is no respect of persons with him:*[z] *Thou hast not despised the lowliness of thy handmaid.*[a] And we see how our Saviour, as he doth commend and bless those faithful and wise servants, who being appointed over his household (placed in any superior rank and office), do behave themselves justly and kindly to their fellow-servants, dispensing them their food in due season;[b] so those which beat and abuse their fellow-servants;[c] that are rigourous and unmerciful in their exactions of debt, or other dealing toward their fellow-servants, he denounces severe punishment and vengeance upon.

The further consideration of this point our Saviour improves as an engagement to imitate him; especially in charity, in humility, in patience: it is proper for a servant to follow, to attend upon in all places and performances, to compose himself to the example, to conform to the garb and condition of his master. Were it not absurd that the servant should be more stately, or more delicate than his master; that he should despise those whom his master vouchsafes to regard; that he should refuse to undertake those employments, should disdain to undergo those hardships his master doth condescend to? To such purpose our Saviour discourses: *Ye call me master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*[d] And having

[s] Gal. i. 10.
[t] 1 Cor. vii. 23.
[u] Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7; *vide* 1 Pet. ii. 16.
[v] Col. iii. 23, 24.
[w] 1 Pet. ii. 18; V. 61.
[x] Rom. xiv. 4.
[y] Col. iv. 1.
[z] Eph. vi. 9; Psal. cxxxv. 14; v. 4.
[a] Luke i. 48.
[b] Matt. xxiv. 45.
[c] Matt. xviii. 28, &c.
[d] John xiii. 13, 14, 15.

directed his disciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts, and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by subjoining, *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his lord.*[e] (He ought in reason to be very well content, if he find such usage as his lord hath willingly and patiently undergone.)

Full of many such practical uses is this excellent doctrine; the which I leave to be deduced by your private meditation.

Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

The proper name, special title, principal relations of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord (the peculiar grand object of our Christian faith, wherein was included or implied what did especially respect his divinity, so far as it is revealed unto or may be comprehended by us), being hitherto expressed, and in some manner explained and applied by us, we proceed to that which follows: those illustrious accidents, or passages and circumstances, chiefly agreeing to his humanity (what he undertook and underwent, performed and enjoyed, in our nature and in our behalf), being here orderly set down; partly for the full and clear description or determination of his person; partly upon design to insinuate those principal doctrines (depending upon or involved in those passages), wherein the mystery of our religion doth consist; which we are chiefly obliged to believe, and which have great influence upon our practice. In the first place (as good order did require) is delivered the manner of his nativity (that is, of his incarnation, or assuming human nature), which in the ancient creeds (as we see in the texts of ancient expositors) was expressed more simply thus: *Qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine;* who was born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. The alteration seems to have been made more distinctly to express the operation of the Holy Ghost in the generation of our Saviour, and what the blessed Virgin his mother did confer thereto. We know in ordinary procreation the influence of the father doth not extend beyond the quickening of the mother's womb, whatever that influence be (for it is a deep and inscrutable mystery of nature (exceeding perhaps the reach of all human philosophy), whether it contain an imparting of somewhat material, or be only the inserting an active vital principle;) the effect of which influence is called *conception;* the word agreeing in some propriety both to the mother, which is said to conceive, and to the child, which is conceived: the further perfecting the work of generation (by forming the *fœtus* from its initial rudiments into a due integrity and fit disposition of parts, nourishing, increasing, and excluding thereof) no further immediately depending upon the father, being carried on by the concurrence of what was first imparted by him, and what is thenceforth communicated by the mother. In regard to which performances, the mother is said τίκτειν: that is, both *gignere* and *parere;* to *conceive*, *bear*, and *to bring forth* (for τίκτειν doth import as much as γεννᾷν, all that a parent doth confer to generation; whence both parents are called τοκεῖς, and τέκνον, a *child*, is used indifferently as relating to both.) Now, to express that influence or efficacy the divine Spirit had in the genetion of our Saviour as man, by which God himself did in a manner supply the place of a father, it was set down, *conceived by the Holy Ghost;* and when it is said, *born of the Virgin Mary*, what the blessed Virgin, as mother, did confer thereto, is to be understood: and the occasion perhaps of thus expressing the thing was that saying of the angel to the Virgin (in the 1st of St. Luke) *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth* (συλλήψῃ ἐν γαστρὶ καὶ τέξῃ) *a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.*

But whatever was the reason or occasion of this expression, it is evident that the proposition and assertion of these truths was intended:[f] 1. That our Saviour was conceived and born; 2. That his conception was effected without any influence of man, only by the

[e] Matt. x. 24, 25; Luke vi. 40; John xv. 20.

[f] Luke i. 31; Matt. i. 20,—Τὸ γεννηθὲν is translated *conceived.*

power of God and operation of the Holy Ghost; 3. That the blessed Virgin Mary did, by the Holy Ghost conceive, and bear, and bring him forth. Let us reflect and observe somewhat upon each of these propositions.

1. Our Saviour was conceived and born: he (the Person before mentioned), Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord; the same who was in the beginning, and did from all eternity exist with God, the eternal Son of God, by whom all things were made, was in the fulness of time conceived and born; that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, and became thereby truly and entirely man; which wonderful mystery is in scripture variously expressed or implied by, the *Word's being made*, or *becoming, flesh;* God being *manifested in the flesh; taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as man; assuming the seed of Abraham; partaking of flesh and blood; descending from heaven; God sending his Son into the world, in likeness of sinful flesh, coming in the flesh.*[g] The result of what is signified by these and the like expressions being this: that he which before from all eternity did subsist in the form or nature of God, being the Son of God, did by a temporal generation truly become man; assuming human nature into the unity of his Person, by a conjunction and union thereof with the divine nature incomprehensible and ineffable: he truly became man, I say, *like unto us in all things, sin only excepted;*[h] consisting of body and soul, endued with all faculties, and subject to all passions, infirmities, necessities, consequent upon or incident to our nature. He did not only seem in shape and outward appearance (as a spectre, deluding men's sight and fancy), but was in perfect truth a man; having a real body;[i] circumscribed and figured like ours, compacted of flesh and blood; that might be seen and felt; that was nourished and grew; that needed and received sustenance; that was frail and tender; passible and sensible; was bruised with blows; torn with scourges; pricked with thorns; pierced with nails; transfixed with an injurious spear.[j] He had a soul too, endued with suitable faculties; an understanding capable of improvement (for he grew in wisdom and stature, and was ignorant (as man) of something he might know;) a will subject and submissive to the divine will; (*Let this cup pass from me, if it be thy will: but, however, not my will, but thine be done:* and, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father, which hath sent me.*[k]) Appetites of meat, drink, sleep, and rest: several passions and affections, φυσικὰ καὶ ἀδιάβλητα πάθη, natural, irreprehensible passions;[l] and those of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, anger, grief, and pity; and these sometimes expressed by most pathetical significations, in groans and tears. Upon occasion of his friend Lazarus's death, it is said, *He groaned in spirit, and was troubled, and wept:** and ye know what heaviness, agonies, excesses of sorrow, disturbances, and amazements (they are terms used by the evangelists) he underwent before his passion: so that, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, *We have not an high-priest that could not so compassionate*† (or sympathise with) *our infirmities, but who in all points tempted* (or proved and exercised) *as we are;* (yet without sin.[m])

Thus did the Son of God (coeternal and essential, to his Father) become the Son of man (truly and entirely of the nature and substance of man;) deficient in no essential part; (devoid of no human property; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience consequent upon our nature (except only sin.)

If you demand the manner how, and the reason why, God thus became man; as to the first (the manner) we must answer, that we can hardly otherwise than by negation determine, not otherwise than by comparison explain it: no words perhaps we use, to signify our conceptions

[g] John i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Phil. ii. 7, 8; Heb. ii. 16, 14; Rom. viii. 3; John xiii. 13, 31; vi. 33, 38, 50, 51, 58; iii. 17; x. 36; xvii. 18; 1 John iv. 9, 2, 3.

[h] Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15.

[i] Matt. xxvii. 2.

* Ἡ ψυχή μου τετάρακται.

† συμπαθῆσαι.

[j] Luke xxii. 64; Matt. xxvi. 67; xxvii. 26; John xix. 1.

[k] Luke xxii. 42; John v. 30.

[l] Mark iii. 5.

[m] John xii. 27; xi. 33; Luke xxii. 44; Matt. xxvi. 37, 38; Mark xiv. 33; Luke xxii. 28.

about these lower things, can perfectly and adequately suit to a mystery so far different from common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity; yet we must affirm, that whatever manner of conceiving or expressing it doth derrogate from the divine perfections, or is repugnant to the nature of things, disagrees from the tenor of divine truths (connected unto or depending upon this mystery), or contradicts (directly or obliquely, immediately or by plain consequence) the language and doctrine of the scriptures, is to be rejected by us:* we may therefore say with the Council of Chalcedon, that in this incarnation of our Lord the divine and human nature were in his person united, ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως,

Ἀσυγχύτως, without commixtion or confusion (for that would induce a third nature, different from both), such as results from the composition or contemperation of the elements into a mixed body; so that he should be neither God nor man: but I know not what other kind of being, without any ground or authority to be supposed, that would destroy, diminish, or alter the properties belonging to each; neither can we conceive the divine nature capable of any such diminution or alteration.

Ἀτρέπτως, without conversion, or transmutation of one nature into the other: not of the divinity into humanity; for how could God, as God, be changed or made, become infirm and passible, consist of body and soul, suffer and die? Not of the humanity into divinity: for how could that, before it did exist at all, be turned into another thing? why should our Saviour be called man, when his humanity was transmuted into the divinity? why is it said, *the Word was made flesh*, if the flesh was changed into the Word? to omit how unimaginable it is, that one substance should be turned into another, especially that a finite substance should be turned into an infinite one; also to omit many dangerous consequences of this opinion, and its inconsistency with many great and plain doctrines of our religion.

Ἀδιαιρέτως, undividedly: so that the two natures have not distinct subsistences, nor do constitute two persons; for there is but one Christ, one Person, to whom being God and man are truly and properly attributed.

Ἀχωρίστως, inseparably; the natures being never separated; the union never dissolved; the same Person never ceasing to be both God and man; no, not when, as man, he suffered and died:[n] for he raised himself from the dead; he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen: as continuing God, he was able to raise himself as man: as being man, he was capable of being raised by himself as God; the union between God and man persisting, when the union between the human body and soul were dissolved.

I might add further, exclusively; that this union of the two natures was not made κατὰ παράστασιν (by assistance or close presence) only; nor κατ' ἐνοίκησιν (by way of inhabitation;) nor κατὰ σχέσιν (by relation;) κατ' ἀξέαν (by dignity or esteem;) κατὰ ταυτοβουλίαν, or καθ' ἁρμονίαν (by consent, or conformity of will and counsel) as Nestorius and such ancient heterodox dogmatists, in opposition to the Catholic expositions of this mystery, did conceit: but it is scarce worth mentioning those antiquated opinions: I cannot longer dwell here: I shall only subjoin (omitting others more wide and improper; as those of Bellarmine, the union of a man's arm to his body; the incision of a bough into a tree, and such like), that nature doth afford us one comparison fit to explain or illustrate the manner of this mysterious union; which is the union of man's soul and body, by which he becomes one person.[o] The soul and body are two substances, very different in kind, properties, and dignity (the one material, extended, divisible, corruptible, passive, lifeless, and senseless; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion), capable also both of separate existence and subsistence by themselves; yet are these (though in a manner difficult for us to imagine or comprehend)

* Cujusmodi sit hæc communicatio, qua natura humana communicatur Verbo, non est hominis definire.—*Alensis.*

[n] John ii. 19.

[o] *Vide* Salmeron. apud Gerard. in exeg. loc. p. 441.

united together, and concur to the constitution of a man (and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, retaining each its natural properties, without any confusion, or conversion of one into the other; so also that a man is truly from them denominated both corporeal and spiritual, mortal and immortal:) in like manner (though more admirably and incomprehensibly) are the divine and human nature united in the Son of God: for (as we read in Athanasius's Creed), as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.

So much for the manner how: as for the reason why the Son of God did thus condescend to assume our nature, if we inquire the impulsive cause that moved him thereto, it was only God's infinite goodness, mercy, and pity towards us: (*So God loved the world, that he thus sent his only begotten Son;*) it was the χρηστότης and φιλανθρωπία, the beneficence and philanthropy (if I may so speak) of God, that induced him by such a debasement, as it were, and an exinanition of himself, to save us.[p] If we desire to contemplate the wisdom of God in this admirable proceeding, and to know why God, among other means and methods (alike perhaps, for all we can know, possible to him), did choose by this to procure our redemption and salvation; I answer (though it becomes us rather to adore the depth of his counsels, than to search or hope to sound it, yet), some congruities of this method to the wisdom of God, and the reason of the thing, are intimated to us, and in some manner are apparent. It became God, as his goodness toward us was infinite, so that the demonstrations thereof to his glory and our good should be answerably so, which perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescension; as a prince could not make any other so great attestation of his favour to his vassal, than by descending from his throne, laying aside his majesty, and putting himself in a like condition, conversing with him freely, subjecting himself to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniences with him. It was expedient our Redeemer should be God, that he might be able by his power to save us; to remove such great obstacles; to subdue so potent enemies (to command and contravene nature; to vanquish hell; to abolish death in our behalf), that by the nearness of his relation, the dignity of his person, and the value of his merit, he might fully appease God's wrath, and perfectly satisfy his justice for us: that his doctrine might carry with it the highest certainty and strongest efficacy; his example might challenge greatest regard and imitation; his laws might have supreme authority, and perfectly oblige: the redemption and salvation of man was an honour too high for any creature to arise to; a work too hard for any but God himself to perform: it was not fit that any creature should intercede or intermeddle in an affair of such importance and eminency. It was also requisite he should be man, that he might procure favour toward man, by perfectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will, as man; that as man had deeply offended and wronged God, so man should highly please and content him; that, in St. Paul's language, *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners* (condemned and exposed to death; God being displeased with mankind for that man's transgression), *so by the obedience of one man many should be made righteous*[q] (absolved from guilt, and exempted from punishment; God being well pleased with, and reconciled to mankind, in regard to that man's dutiful observance:) it was decent, that as man did approve, so man should condemn sin in the flesh;[r] as man by wilful self-pleasing was brought to misery, so by voluntary suffering he should be restored to happiness: ἔπρεπε, *It became him* (saith the apostle), *for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering:*[s] it was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, and propitiate for our faults to succour and relieve us in our distresses, should be tender of our good and sensible of our needs[t] (should by nature and experience be disposed συμπαθεῖν, to

[p] John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9; Tit. iii. 4.

[q] Rom. v. 19, &c.

[r] Rom. viii. 3.

[s] Heb. ii. 10.

[t] Heb. iv. 15; v. 2.

compassionate our infirmities, and μετριοπαθεῖν, to be gently affected towards us in respect of our ignorances and errors:) *Whence* (saith the same divine apostle) *it behoved him* (ὤφειλε, he ought, according to the design apppointed and undertaken by him) *to be in all things made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest toward God, in things pertaining to God, that he might propitiate for the sins of the people: for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is able to succour those that are tempted.*[u] I might add, that, by appearing in human shape (visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us), he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intention toward us, in a less amazing and a more obliging way than could otherwise have been; that thus with more advantage he could describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to follow; showing us how we should as men behave ourselves, how moderate our appetites, how govern our passions; how use and order all the powers of our soul and members of our body: neither was it possible otherwise that so lively a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, patience, and humility could have been exhibited.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was intended to recapitulate and reconcile (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, and ἀποκαταλλάξαι), all things in heaven and earth;[v] should be the great mediator and peacemaker between God and man; should repair God's honour, and dispense his grace; purchase man's peace, and procure his salvation; that he should be the most nearly related to both parties; even, if possible, (and what is to God impossible?) be himself both God and man; the Son of God, and our brother; the same in nature with God, in kind with us.

The proper use and influence of which great doctrine upon our souls should be to cause us with highest degrees of love and thankfulness to adore the infinite goodness of that God who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might raise us up from the lowest depth of meanness and wretchedness to the highest pitch of honour and happiness we are capable of. What words can express, what thought can reach, a favour so ineffable and inconceivable? Well might St. Paul call it ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην, love transcending all knowledge.[w] Well may heaven and earth be astonished, and hell tremble, at such a miracle of mercy. The sovereign Majesty of heaven, the Lord of glory, the world's Maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, to become a poor, small, weak, and frail man;[x] to dwell in a tabernacle of flesh; to converse with vile, silly, wretched mortals; to be subject to want, reproach, and pain! Ὦ βαθὸς! O depth of love and goodness unsearchable! If this will not, what consideration can raise us? what benefit affect or oblige us? What prodigious ingratitude will it be, to be insensible or neglectful of such kindness!

Another great use of this doctrine is, to engage us, as to universal obedience and submission to God's will, so particularly to humility and patience and charity. Did God thus submit, thus abase himself; and shall we be refractory, shall we exalt ourselves, shall we repine at any dispensation or proceeding of God? To these purposes St. Paul applies it: *Let the same mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in the fashion of man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death:*[y] and, *Know* (or consider) *the grace* (or graciousness) *of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that *for our sake* (ἐπτώχευε) *he became poor* (a beggar), *being himself rich, that ye by his poverty might become rich.*[z] It is a consideration by which he incites them to charity.

Thus, and to such purpose, are we to believe our Saviour's conception and nativity. Of which, secondly, it is affirmed, and we are to consider, that he was *conceived by the Holy Ghost;* that is, by the virtue and operation of the Holy Ghost the blessed Virgin became impreg-

[u] Heb. ii. 17, 18.
[v] Ἀνακεφαλαιώσεσθαι, Eph. i. 10; Col. i. 20.
[w] Eph. iii. 19; *vide* Luke i. 78.
[x] 1 John 14.
[y] Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8.
[z] 2 Cor. viii. 9.

nated, and did conceive him, without intervention of any man or father. Joseph was (ὡς ἐνομίζετο) in outward esteem and carriage, but God only was in truth, his father;[a] which is so perspicuously and fully asserted in the Gospels, that those who dare (upon weak pretences of discourse) to contradict it, deserve not to be considered otherwise than as perverters of the scripture, and subverters of its authority and use:[b] nothing can be certainly known thence, if this truth be not.

The manner of this operation, as by St. Luke expressed, is by the supervention of the Holy Ghost, and the divine power's overshading the blessed Virgin;[c] words of so general signification, and so little as, to their full extent, intelligible by us, that they well serve to bound our curiosity, and forbid further inquiry. Some indeed have been so bold, as to determine that the Holy Ghost did bring from heaven and instil a body into the Virgin; that our Saviour's flesh was made of a divine seed, and of the substance of God: that the Holy Ghost did in his conception create and impart somewhat of matter. It is enough to say, that these are rash and groundless conceits. The Fathers, more soberly (to prevent dangerous and unbecoming thoughts and speeches in this matter), say, that our Saviour was *conceived by the Holy Ghost*, not σπερματικῶς (seminally) but δημιουργικως (operatively), οὐ διὰ συνουσίας· ἀλλὰ διὰ δυνάμεως, not by copulation, but by power; *Non de substantia Spiritus Sancti, sed de potentia;* Not out of the substance, but by virtue of the Holy Ghost.[d] Further than so, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit?* Who can declare the τὸ πῶς, the perfect manner of a generation so sublime and wonderful?—The reasons of his being thus conceived are more obvious; *Conceived by the Holy Ghost.*

In my endeavour to show the reasons why our Saviour was thus conceived, I was interrupted the last time: I shall therefore, resuming a little what was said, proceed.

[a] Luke iii. 23.
[b] *Vide* Episcopium de Josephilis.
[c] Luke i. 35.
[d] Valentius and his sect of old; Menno, Servetus, &c.; Smalcius, &c.; Socinus, his followers; Damasc. iii. 2; Justin Martyr. Apol. ii. Aug. ix. Serm. de Tempore, 53; Isa.

I. It was the most fit way of effecting that so necessary conjunction of the divine and human nature. A work of such glory and grandeur, of such grace and goodness, was not to be achieved by any other agent than him who is the substantial virtue and love of God; by whom we see all extraordinary and most eminent works managed and attributed to him. In the creation of the world he moved upon the waters, forming and actuating the world; to him those signal works of providence, revelation of divine truth, and prediction of future events, performance of miracles, renovation of men's minds, and reformation of their manners, are in a particular manner ascribed; and so to him this most high and glorious performance was proper and due.

2. It being necessary that our Saviour should be consecrated to his great offices, and perfectly sanctified in his person; and those performances being appropriated to the Holy Ghost (the natural spring and author of all derived sanctity), his efficacy therefore must needs intervene, if Jeremiah, St. Paul, St. John Baptist (persons designed to offices and employments in dignity and importance so far inferior), were sanctified and separated, and filled with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb;[e] in how more excellent a kind and degree was it requisite that he should be sanctified, who was sent to redeem and purify the world from all filth and fault? It was necessary that his human nature, which God vouchsafed so highly to advance (to assume into so near a conjunction and union with himself), should be free from all stain and pollution (such as adheres to our sinful flesh and corrupt nature in ordinary propagation;) that he whom God should so dearly love, and be so entirely pleased with, should be void of the least inclination to iniquity or impurity;[f] *for God*, as the Psalmist tells us, *is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with him:*[g] *He is of purer eyes than* (so much as) *to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity,*[h] much less would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, so dear a respect

[e] Jer. i. 5; Gal. i. 15; Luke i. 15.
[f] Rom. viii. 3.
[g] Psal. v. 4.
[h] Heb. i. 13.

and complacence with himself. It was also necessary that he who was appointed to appease God's displeasure, and reconcile him fully toward us; to redeem mankind from the guilt and power of sin: to satisfy and expiate for all our offences, with full authority to teach, command, and exemplify all righteousness; should himself know no sin: *Such a high-priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners—who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins.*[i] The sacrifice expiatory of our sins was and ought to be *a Lamb* (ἄμωμος καὶ ἄσπιλος) *without blemish and without spot:*[j] therefore was he fully sanctified, and became τὸ ἅγιον, that *holy thing*, as he is called by the angel: (*Therefore that holy thing, which shalt be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God;*[k]) therefore from the fountain of holiness, the Holy Ghost (whose proper name doth import holiness, whose proper work it is to sanctify), did he derive a perfect sanctity and purity in his sacred conception.

3. I might add, as observable, the analogy (or resemblance) that is between the conception of our Saviour for us, and his formation in us;[l] his generation and our regeneration; his becoming our brother in the flesh, our becoming his brethren in the Spirit; both being performed by the same agent: as Christ was made true man, and partaker of our nature, so we become true Christians, and (θείας φύσεως κοινωνοὶ) *partakers of the divine nature* by the operation of the same divine Spirit:[m] as he by nature, so we by grace, are born *not by blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*[n] Hence accrues a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was *made like us*, but as we become like him, and are begot of God by the same heavenly virtue, by the same incorruptible seed.[o]

The proper use of this dictrine is to cause us further still to adore the goodness and wisdom of God, so fully, so fitly carrying on that infinitely merciful and gracious work of our redemption; all the divine Persons in a particular manner conspiring, as in the design, so in the execution thereof: the Father sending his Son; the Son condescending to come; the Holy Ghost bringing him into the world: to which blessed Trinity, therefore, rendering all praise and thanks, we proceed to that which is further contained in these words, *Born of the Virgin Mary.*

Born of her. Being *born* doth not barely denote his nativity, but includes his whole human generation (with the parts and progress thereof;) implying all that she, as a mother, did confer thereto; and comprehending, 1. His conception of her substance: whence he is called *the fruit of her womb; rod* (or *branch*) *sprouting from the stem of Jesse;* and, *Behold* (saith the angel), συλλήψῃ ἐν γαστρὶ, *thou shalt conceive in thy womb.*[p] 2. The nutrition, augmentation, and entire conformation of his body, also of her blood and substance; whence her womb is said to bear him (*Blessed is the womb that bare thee;*) that she was ἔγκυος (*gravidated* or) *great with child* of him; and εὑρέθη, *she was found* (she was observed by apparent signs) ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα, *to be of child* with him.[q] 3. His nativity itself; thus expressed by the Evangelist: *The days were accomplished that she should be delivered; and she brought forth her first-born Son.*[r] Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is attributed plainly to the Virgin; whence she is truly and properly (and is accordingly frequently called in the Gospels) *the mother of our Saviour, the mother of our Lord;*[s] and hath been (may be in some propriety of speech) styled Θεοτόκος, *Deipara; Dei genitrix et Dei mater:* the bearer and mother of God (that is, of him who is God, though not of him as God.)

But let us further observe what the words afford to us considerable: *Born of the Virgin Mary:* they imply our Saviour born of woman, born of a virgin, born of Mary. Of a woman, that was necessary or requisite to be; of a virgin, that was convenient, decent, and wonderful; of Mary, that determines the

[i] 2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. ii. 26, 27.
[j] 1 Pet. i. 19.
[k] Luke i. 35.
[l] Gal. iv. 19.
[m] 2 Pet. i. 4.
[n] John i. 13.
[o] 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 John iii. 9.
[p] Luke i. 41, 31; Isa. xi. 1; Luke xi. 27; ii. 5.
[q] Matt. i. 18.
[r] Luke ii. 6, 7.
[s] Luke i. 43.

person, and involves many circumstances of importance.

1. I say, *born of a woman*, ἐκ σοῦ (as it is in the best copies of St. Luke, chap. i. 35), and ἐκ γυναικὸς (as it is in St. Paul, Gal. iv. 4), not *in* a woman only (ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν, Matt. i. 20), or *through* a woman, but *of* a woman; that is, of the matter and substance of a woman; so as thereby to bear the relation of a kinsman, to become consanguineous to all mankind (whom God did *make of one blood*.[t]) We may easily conceive that God could have immediately created (as he did our first parents) a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served his design of reconciling himself to us and redeeming us; to the effecting, that, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity of blood, was requisite, or at least more convenient and suitable. Our blood being tainted, our whole stock degraded by the disloyalty and rebellion of our common ancestors, it was fit it should be purged and restored by the satisfactory merit and fidelity of one who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted and received into God's family, it was fit it should be by intervention of a common relation: such is St. Paul's discourse; *God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law; that by performing the obedience due to the law, he might redeem those who, being obliged to obey the law, did yet transgress it*,[u] (ἵνα τὴν υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν; that we might be constituted sons; receive the state and quality of sons to God.) It was congruous that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God (had overthrown and triumphed over God's creature,) should, in just revenge, and for reparation of God's honour, by the strength and constancy of one proceeding from a woman, be himself defeated and debased, according to the prophetical promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head*:[v] of the woman; the man is not mentioned; for (that which is next to be considered) he was *born of the Virgin Mary*. So it was of old presignified and prophesied; *A Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son*; a Virgin; *alma* (so Aquila renders it), ἀπόκρυφος, a recluse; that perhaps seldom had seen, had never however known a man.[w]

2. *Born of a Virgin*. So it was, and so it was fit it should be. It was decent that the tabernacle in which God himself would dwell should be wholly proper and enclosed; that the temple of the divinity should be holy and separate; that the soil whence holiness itself would germinate should be clear and free from all sordid mixtures; that none should touch the *border of that mountain* where God would *manifest himself*, nor the lust of man approach that place whence the glory of God should so illustriously shine forth.[x] It was also more than convenient, to excite admiration, to beget faith, to procure reverence in us, that our Saviour should be born in a manner so peculiar and miraculous; it could not otherwise appear plainly that he was the Son of God. Who that hears of such a passage, can forbear to wonder and consider? Who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by sufficient and certain attestation he learns to have been conceived without any concurrence of man? Who can do otherwise than adore him, that was born in a manner so glorious and supernatural? This, it seems, was that new thing (so strange and admirable) which in the prophet Jeremiah God did foreshow he would create in the earth (then when he would restore Zion, and make a new covenant with Israel), *a woman shall compass a man*;[y] that is, a woman (in a manner extraordinary, without man's concourse) shall conceive and contain a man; a man, who shall accomplish those great things there prophesied of and promised.

But further; born of Mary; of that particular person determined and described in the Gospel; her that was espoused to and lived with (Joseph the carpenter, that was born in the town of Bethlehem; lived in Nazareth; was descended in a direct lineage from king David, according to both a natural and legal descent, and consequently from Abraham;[z] she being

[t] Acts xvii. 26.
[u] Gal. iv. 4, 5.
[v] Gen. iii. 15.
[w] Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23; Luke i. 34.
[x] Exod. xix. 11, &c.
[y] Jer. xxxi. 22.
[z] ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριᾶς Δαβίδ.—*Vide* Luke ii. 4.

also of the same stock and family, as may be collected from some circumstances intimated in the story, but more certainly deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, and the assertions implying their accomplishment;) Mary, I say, a princess by blood and progeny; and extracted from the most illustrious stem upon earth, not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) most dear to God; yet she such as was very mean and poor in condition; humble and meek in spirit; religious and devout toward God: such the passages occurring in the Gospel concerning her do show her; such that most excellent hymn of her in in St. Luke (dictated by a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable; devotion full of ardent love, passionate thankfulness, hearty joy tempered with submiss reverence) do demonstrate her to have been. Of a mother so related and so qualified, was our Saviour born. So related; that was necessary, for the declaration of God's truth and fidelity, performing those ancient predictions and promises made to the fathers; to Abraham (*that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed;*) to David, to whom God had sworn, as St. Peter tells us, that of *the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ, to sit upon his throne;* who (as appears by many passages in the Gospels) God's people did expect and believe that he should be the *rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch growing out of his roots;* in whom the horn of David should bud; who should *raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen;* and *rule over the kingdom of Jacob for ever.*[a] So was the blessed Virgin related, and to such purpose (that all God's predictions and promises concerning the circumstances of our Saviour's birth might be verified), and so qualified; such in outward condition; holy in disposition of mind; homely in state of life; to teach us, that God doth not so much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this world, as the inward frame and temper of spirit: it is some disparagement to those vain glories, by men so greatly admired; and it may induce us but moderately to esteem them, to consider, that God did not choose for the mother of his Son and Saviour of mankind any great princess, any honourable or wealthy personage; but her that was espoused to a mean artisan, rich only in grace, splendid in spiritual endowments; *adorned with that hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptibility of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*[b] Such an one the Son of God chose to bear himself, to bear duty unto; to confer that great favour, that high honour upon (an honour, among exterior ones, the highest that ever was vouchsafed to any person, to any mere creature: for spiritual blessings our Saviour himself doth perfer even above this great privilege: *Whosoever* (saith he) *shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother:*[c] the same is so according to a more excellent kind of relation.) By the way we may observe, that although the blessed Virgin was in that respect κεχαριτωμένη, *especially favoured and blessed among women;*[d] though *all nations* must needs therefore esteem and *call her blessed*, though she justly acknowledged that *God had done* μεγαλεῖα (*mighty* and magnificent *things for her*), yet in reality to have Christ born in our souls, to partake of his divine grace and presence in our hearts, is a higher honour, a truer happiness than that:* for when the good woman, ravished by our Saviour's discourse, did cry out, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee: Yea rather* (said he) *blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*[e]

We must not also neglect to observe, that our Saviour chose so mean a parentage, partly that he might taste and undergo the hardships and inconvenience incident to our nature (thereby more fully meriting and satisfying for us;) partly to give us example of the most difficult virtues and duties (of humility, meekness, and patience), showing us how we should cheerfully endure wants, pains, disgraces;

[a] Gen xxvi. 4; xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 11; Gal. iii. 8; Acts iii. 25; Psal. cxxxii. 17; Acts ii. 30; *vide* Matt. xxii. 42; xx. 30; ii. 5; xxi. 15; xxiii. 9; xv. 27; Rom. i. 3; Isa. xi. 1, 10; Rom. xv. 12; Rev. xxii. 16; v. 5; Amos ix. 11; Acts xv. 16; Luke i. 32, 33.

* Οὐδὲ τὸ κυοφορῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἐκεῖνον τόκον τεκεῖν ἔχει τι κέρδος.

[b] 1 Pet iii. 4.

[c] Matt. xii. 50.

[d] Luke i. 28, 48, 49.

[e] Luke xi. 27, 28.

contentedly want all the pleasure, wealth, and splendour of the world.

The use of this point concerning our Saviour's birth of the blessed Virgin is not to beget in us fond opinions, or to ground scandalous practices in respect to her; attributing to her (I cannot say less than sacrilegiously and profanely) such swelling, vain, false titles and elogies, *Regina Cæli*, *Salus Mundi*, *Mater Misericordiarum*, *Domina nostra*, *Sponsa Dei*, and the like; ascribing to her the most sublime attributes and actions of God, providence and protection over us, yea redemption itself; performing acts of religous veneration (and those in a very high manner and strain), and all this without any good reason, any plausible authority, or considerable example; I say, from such groundless conceits and dangerous practices we should beware; which, as they derogate from God's honour and prejudice his service, so they do rather injure, abuse, and discredit the blessed Virgin, than do any right or honour to her; whose greater honour indeed it was to be a meek and humble servant, than to be the mother of our Saviour and Lord: the greatest and truest honour we can do her is to imitate her grace, and to obey him who vouchsafed to be her son. But I will not prosecute that matter, nor further insist upon this point: some practical uses thereof I have in the precedent discourse insinuated; the rest I leave to your meditation.

Next our Saviour's incarnation (his conception and nativity), with the causes and manner thereof (partly expressed, partly implied), doth succeed his passion. It might be inquired, why something concerning his life interceding is not mentioned, since we see the apostles, in their preachings declaratory concerning the principal matters of our faith, take especial notice of those things: *Ye know* (saith St. Peter) in his catechetical discourse to Cornelius and his friends, *the thing that was done throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; Jesus of Nazareth; how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him.*[f] And the same apostle in his speech to the Jews, *Ye men of Israel* (saith he) *hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye also know: him, being delivered*, &c.[g] Why, therefore, is not some mention made here concerning the manner of our Saviour's life, the quality of his works and actions? I answer; that it did suffice to describe our Saviour (as the object of the faith we profess) by such characters as did most notoriously determine and distinguish his person; and withal did involve and intimate the most signal mysteries of our faith, the most important doctrines of our religion, the main design of his undertaking, the fit method in which he prosecuted it, and the most effectual means which he prosecuted it, and the most effectual means by which he accomplished it: the belief of which doth virtually contain (or consequentially infer) our belief of whatever beside it is necessary or expedient for us to believe concerning him. There was nothing about our Saviour's person more conspicuous and visible than his trial, condemnation, and execution, in the time, under the presidency, of Pontius Pilate; nor was any passage of his life, any performance of his, more conducible to the accomplishment of that design, which God was pleased he should undertake: it was therefore sufficient and fit to describe him by this and other such passages (well attested, important, and influential:) and if we believe in him who so suffered, we consequently believe all that he did or said; all that is in the Gospels (the most certain and authentical testimonies) delivered concerning him; and that he truly was whatever we see there he did pretend and teach himself to be (the true Messias, the only Son of God, and Saviour of the world.) By this passage, therefore (assuming his resurrection), the apostles do characterize him: for instance, *Be it known to you all* (saith St. Peter), *that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you have crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead, in that doth this man stand before you whole:*[h] *Neither to us only is the Lamb*

[f] Acts x. 37, 38.

[g] Acts ii. 22.

[h] Acts iv. 10.

slain:[i] a periphrasis fully and clearly denoting his person; but the Jews themselves (though out of hatred and in contempt) call him ordinarily *Talui* (*Suspensus*, him that was hanged), and ὁ ἀνασκολοπισθεῖς (you know), in the pagan scoffer's language, doth signify him.[j] But as to the thing itself.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead—

This part of our Saviour's humiliation is in the ancient creeds expressed more concisely by one word, *crucifixus: crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato et sepultus*; crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried; so it goes in the text of Ruffinus, and agreeably in other ancient expositors. But this alteration (or accession), it seems, was made (as for the express disclaiming of some heretical conceits that afterward sprung up, denying the real truth of our Saviour's death, so) for the more full and clear representation of the thing, by implying the manner, and main circumstances, and complete effect thereof; for by suffering (I conceive) was intended to express, that what he underwent was in way of judicial process and sentence of law, obtaining force and effect upon him (that he was prosecuted, adjudged, and punished as a malefactor; for the word πάσχειν, applied as in this case did, I suppose (as *to suffer* doth now in common use with us), by an εὐφημισμὸς (a mild and modest kind of speech), bear this emphasis, importing to be punished with death in a legal course:) then being *crucified* doth show the kind and manner of that suffering, which was most painful and disgraceful; and being dead, was added to declare the full effect and extreme complement of all; (he so suffered, was so crucified, as thereby to lose his life.) Let us somewhat ponder upon these particulars distinctly, then consider all together.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate. Suffered: that is (I say, in my apprehension), underwent judgment and punishment as a malefactor. I deny not but the word may in signification extend to all the infirmities, inconveniences, pains, and sorrows that our Saviour did undergo, both in the course of his ministerial performances, and chiefly before his death;[k] but I think those sufferings of his rather considerable upon other accounts (as consequents upon our nature assumed, adjuncts to his conditions, and concomitants of his passion) than here directly intended; for to interpret ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, in Pontius Pilate's time, so as to respect any time before our Saviour's being accused and arraigned before him, seems a stretch and a strain. *Suffered*, here, I therefore take for *punished*, in way of seeming justice, as a malefactor. That he should thus suffer, God had determined; and it was foretold by the prophet Isaiah, *that he should be numbered among the transgressors*: and St. Paul tells us, *that God made him sin for us* (that is, ordered that he should be dealt with as a sinful or criminous person), *who knew no sin* (was perfectly innocent, and free from the least tendency to any fault:[l]) and we see in the history, that he was impeached of high crimes; as a blasphemer against God (assuming to himself the title power, and properties, and prerogatives of God;[m]) as a seditious and rebellious person (perverting, or stiring up, the nation, and hindering to give tribute to Cæsar, and pretending that he was Christ, a king;) as a deluder and seducer of the people;[n] in general, as a κακοποιὸς, a criminal person and malefactor: and that he was condemned (though by sentence extorted against the conscience of the judge, by malicious importunity of the accusers), and suffered in pretence as such, is clear, and confessed on all hands. And that we may the better admire the wisdom and goodness of God in this dispensation, let us meditate upon the reasons why it was so ordered. To which purpose we may consider,

1. That as our Saviour did choose to live a life of greatest meanness and hardship, so for the same reasons he would die a death of all most bitter and uncomfortable; such is to our nature the death of a malefactor; there is nothing to man's nature (and especially to honest, ingenu-

[i] Rev. xiii. 8.

[j] Grot. de Ver. ii. 2.

[k] *Vide* Matt. xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22.

[l] Luke xxii. 37; Mark xv. 28; Isa. liii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 21.

[m] John v. 18; x. 30; Matt. xxvi. 61, 65.

[n] Luke xxiii. 2; Matt. xxvii. 63; John vii. 12; xviii. 30.

ous, and well-disposed nature, wherein natural modesty is not extinguished or decayed) more abominable. God hath put into us, for good purposes, a lively sense of all disgrace; and of all disgraces, that which proceeds from imputation of odious crimes is most disgustful and pungent; and being conscious of innocense doth increase the smart; and to perceive ourselves to die under it (to leave this world with such an irreparable stain upon our reputation and memory) is still more grievous: to languish by degrees, and endure the torments of a long and sharp disease, all ingenuous persons would much rather choose, than in this manner, being esteemed and dealt with as a villain, to find a present and easy dispatch: we see somewhat of this resentment breaking forth in our Saviour, and how man's nature discovered itself in that question, *Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?*[o] Yes; he loathed to be so treated, yet chose it as he did other the worst inconveniences incident to our nature and to that low condition which he put himself into: to endure want, and fare hardly; to be contemned, envied, hated, scorned, and reproached in all the course of his life: he had not been so complete and extreme a sufferer, if he had died any other way.[p] He was oftentimes in danger of death, both from the secret machinations and open violences of those which envied and hated him; but he industriously declined a death so easy, so honourable (if I may so say; for it is not so great a disgrace to perish by private malice, or by sudden rage, as by the solemn and deliberate proceeding of men in public place, credit, and authority:) he showed his disciples, say the gospels, that it was incumbent upon him (ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν) to suffer many things, *to be rejected*, or reprobated (ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι, ἐξουδενοῦσθαι, to be vilified and made nothing of,) *by the chief priests, and elders, and scribes; to be condemned to death, and delivered to the Gentiles,* εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι, *to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified.*[q] Thus would our Saviour suffer, not only in his body, by bruises and wounds; in his soul, by most bitter sorrows; but in his name and reputation, by the worst of ignominies: undergoing, as well all the infamy, as the infirmity that did belong to or could befall us: thus by all means showing his charity and exercising his compassion, and advancing his merit for us.

2. Again; death by public judgment, as a malefactor, did agree to the nature of his undertaking, was congruous to his designs in dying; did aptly represent what he was doing, and signify why he did it. We were guilty; we deserved condemnation; extreme pain and shame were due to us for our sins; he undertook to satisfy for us, and therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment; was reputed, was called, was dealt with, as a malefactor in our stead. What we had really done; dishonoured and usurped upon God; disordered and troubled the world; deceived and seduced ourselves and others (by our negligent mistakes and our wilful miscarriages, our evil practices and examples), that was imputed to him: *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all:*[r] he not only bore an equivalent punishment, but in a manner an equal blame with us.

3. Add hereto, that since it was determined he should die for us, and that not in a natural but a violent manner, and that to satisfy divine justice; it was fit he should do it in that way wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernible; wherein it might most plainly appear, that God did exact and take, Christ did yield unto and undergo punishment: *All judgment is God's* (as Moses tells us) performed by authority, derived from him;[s] all magistrates are his officers; by them he orders and governs the world: what, therefore, is done in a way of formal judgment by persons of authority, God himself may be said in an especial manner to do (as being done by his commission, in his stead, in his behalf.) It was therefore an act of submission to God's justice, becoming the person he sustained (of our

[o] Luke xxii. 52; Matt. xxvi. 55.

[p] John v. 18; x. 32, 38; viii. 37, 40, 59; vii. 19. 25.

[q] Matt. xx. 18; xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22; Mark ix. 12.

[r] Isa. liii. 6.

[s] Deut. i. 17.

Surety and our Saviour), to undergo such a judgment and such a punishment. Seasonably, therefore, did our Saviour answer Pilate, vouching his authority, *Thou hadst no power at all over* (or *against*) *me, except it were given thee from above*:[t] it was in regard to that supreme and original authority of God, that our Saviour subjected himself to these inferior and subordinate powers, as the proper instruments of God's justice. Had he suffered in any other way (by any private malice or passion of men), God's providence had been less visible, Christ's obedience not so remarkable; and if he must die by public hands, it must be as a criminal, upon pretence of guilt; there must be testimonies produced, however false; there must be a sentence pronounced, though partial and unjust: no man is prosecuted or persecuted by authority, without some colour of desert.

4. Further, in no other way perhaps could our Saviour display (with such advantage) all manner of virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, and our benefit; whether we consider the occasions to exercise his virtue, or the means of showing it. The judgment-hall, with all the streets that led him thither, and thence to execution, attended by guards of soldiers, and accompanied by clamours of the people, where so many theatres, whereupon he had opportunity (convenience and leisure) publicly to act the parts of the highest and hardest virtues; to declare his courage and constancy in defence of truth, and maintenance of a good conscience; his meekness and patience in bearing the greatest affronts and reproaches, injuries and calumnies the worst imaginable; his entire resignation to God's will; his submission and obedience to man's law and authority; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing, in praying for, yea in suffering all this for the good of those, who in a manner so despiteful, injurious, and cruel, did persecute him: all these graces and virtues, by the matter being thus ordered, were, in a degree most high, in a manner most conspicuous, demonstrated to the praise of God's name, and the advancement of his truth; for the confirmation of our faith; an instruction, encouragement, and inducement of good practice to us.

Neither must we omit to consider the further emphasis that lies in the word *suffer*, which implies our Saviour not only to have been dealt with as a malefactor, but to have really endured what a man in that case might or should do: that he was sensible and affected (according to the frame of human nature) with the pain, disgrace, and shame, and all evils whatever did appear to attend his passion: as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, accordingly were the pains that he felt, both in body and soul, most sharp and afflictive. Some men may fondly pretend to, or falsely glory in, a stupid apathy, or a stubborn contempt of all those evils to which our nature is subject: our Saviour did not so, but with a quiet submission and sweet composedness of mind resented them; as God intended we should do when he implanted sense and passion in our natural constitution, and ordered objects to affect and afflict them, for our use and advantage.

Thus, and for such reasons and to such purposes (as I conceive), did our Saviour suffer or undergo judgment and punishment: it is added, *under Pontius Pilate*, ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου: where the preposition ἐπὶ may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen (in the time of Pontius Pilate's government or presidency over Judæa; so ἐπὶ is frequently used), or it may further imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion (by or under Pontius Pilate, as president and judge; so the word is sometimes used.) Neither of these senses, I suppose, were distinctly, but both conjunctly intended here, in relation to the Gospel history; the which here (as to the main passages) we are supposed to know, and profess to believe; neither do I think any more of mystery designed, beyond the full and clear determination of our Saviour's person, the declaration of whom we believe in, by circumstances most apt and suitable to that purpose; the time when, the person under whom, and consequently the place where, and somewhat of the manner how, he suffered. However, all these circum-

[t] John xix. 11.

stances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice. The time (in itself most fit, and agreeable to divine predictions) doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, and confirm his veracity, constancy, and fidelity: when the fulness of time was come, he grieved at present evils, even to a degree of excessive anguish, trouble, and agony (περίλυπος, ἀδημονεῖν γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ, ἡ ψυχή μου τετάραχται, are words used to express his sorrowful resentment;) he feared future evils, to a degree of horror and amazement (to an ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, that is, to be affrighted and astonished:) such height of passion did the sense of present pangs, the foresight of impending evils, the apprehension of his own, the consideration of our state, raise him to: such a burden, all the sins of mankind, to lie upon his shoulders, no wonder if he groaned under it: God's displeasure flaming out against sin, no wonder it did terrify him: such a Father (whom he so dearly loved) frowning upon, and hiding his face from him, it might well trouble him: such a pity, such a love, contemplating man's sinfulness, feeling his misery, it is not strange that it should affect him. But I must pass over this most large and fruitful subject of meditation. When the world was in the most general peace and deepest calm, and consequently man's attention more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction; when the greatest (or the most considerable) part of the world was united under one empire, and so more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual commonwealth (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction;) when mankind generally was better civilized, inquisitive after knowledge, and receptive of truth; when the sceptre of legislation and supreme authority was just departed from Judah; while the Jewish temple yet stood, but not long before its destruction; when the seventy hebdomades (of years) were near expiring (the time when the Messias should be cut off;[u] in short, when all things were duly prepared and suited for the great effects designed by God to proceed from our Saviour's passion and other performances, then did he suffer and do what God had in his wisdom and goodness predetermined, presignified, and predicted.

I might add, the time was fit to be set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncertainty about it. As for the person whom; if we consider him as a Roman stranger, as a governor and judge, according to his personal qualities, or according to his deportment in this affair, something in all these respects may offer itself observable. He was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel: so Jews and Gentiles conspired in violence and injury against their common Saviour; that so (in type and mystery) *every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.*[v] Neither was it for nothing decreed by God, that the Jews should deliver our Saviour up to the Gentiles (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) *to mock and scourge, and crucify him.*[w] The Jews, out of envy and malice, delivered up, accused, prosecuted, instigated, and importuned against him; the Gentiles, out of ignorance, profaneness, and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him: whereby the ingratitude, iniquity, and impiety of all mankind, in some sort did appear, and was aptly represented; and in consequence thereof his infinite goodness is demonstrated, who for so impious, unjust, flagitious a generation, for such malicious enemies and cruel persecutors, did willingly suffer: he suffered for them by whom he suffered.[x] I might add, that a stranger was more likely to be a fair and indifferent judge, and to do what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial. Consider Pilate as a governor and judge, for so he was; Cæsar's procurator, and president of Judæa (ἐπίτροπος, and ἡγεμών:) and therein we may discern the wisdom and special providence of God punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of justice:[y] the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and man (though in a case of plain outrage and highest injustice against him-

[u] Dan ix. 26.

[v] Rom. iii. 19.

[w] Matt. xx. 19; xxvii 18.

[x] Rom. v. 6, ἀσεβῶν.—Ver. 8, ἁμαρτωλῶν.—1 Pet. iii. 18, ἀδίκων.—Rom. v. 10; Col. i. 21.

[y] Matt. xxvii. 2, &c

self;) the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed to him by God, and the venerable name of justice, were so abused. So that if ever, then one might have said with the Wise Man, *I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.*[z] As for this Pilate's personal qualities, he is reported by the historians near those times, to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper; wilful and haughty in spirit;[a] rapacious, violent, and cruel in his proceedings; and was therefore a proper instrument of providence for the execution of such a business, so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so villainous and barbarous according to man's intention: such an one deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so base and execrable, was worthy to be employed, might be ready to undertake therein: it had not been so plausible in itself, that such an act should, nor so credible that it could, proceed from any person of good disposition or right intention. But of him it could not be improbable, who, by his former violences[b] (such as upon their complaints did soon after remove him from his charge), had so incensed the Jews, that he should not stick to gratify them in a matter that they so earnestly concerned themselves in, and which in semblance[c] (setting apart considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest; in yielding up so poor and inconsiderable (in outward show) a person, however in his own conscience most innocent, as a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage. Such he was; and yet it is observable, that he behaved himself, in comparison of the furious Jews, with some moderation and ingenuity. He was so fair in examination of the case, as, notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecution, to discern the right, and declare our Saviour guiltless;[d] he was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the Jews, and once, twice, a third time, to challenge them, *Why, what evil hath he done?*[e] As often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea, his will and intention) to free the innocent person; yet had he not the heart or the honesty thoroughly to resist their importunity; they were more obstinate in their wicked, than he resolute in his good purpose: so out of fear to offend them, and favour to oblige them (those usual corrupters of right judgment), he yielded to them; suffering himself basely to be overborne by their wicked solicitations, sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest and their implacable malice. Thus did this heathen judge behave himself, serving divine Providence, not only in the public and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due to us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame in himself; in outward show, he condemned our Saviour: in truth, he condemned himself (his corrupt judge) and the Jews (his malicious accusers:) though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation, and afforded a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence; such as was requisite to confute all the Jewish calumnies and aspersions, and to confirm our faith.

Furthermore; the name of Pontius Pilate intimates the place of our Saviour's passion, he being well known to have been governor of Judæa, and to have his tribunal of justice at the mother city thereof, Jerusalem; at Jerusalem, that *bloody city*, as the prophet calls it, whose character it was to be *the killer of the prophets, and stoner of them that were sent unto her; out of which it was* (in a manner) *impossible that a prophet should perish;*[f] yet the place of all the world most favoured and graced by God by special benefits and privileges; *his own proper seat* (*the city of God. the city of the great King*, so it is styled) *which he had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel* (out of all the people upon earth) *to put his name* (to place his especial presence) *there;* the holy, the beloved city: there, at his own doors, as it were, before his own sacred palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged and executed;[g] by procurement of his own

[z] Eccles. iii. 16. [a] Philo. Josephus, &c.
[b] Joseph. Antiq. xviii. 5.
[c] Mark xv. 15. [d] John xix. 6.
[e] Luke xxiii. 14, &c.; Acts iii. 13.

[f] Ezek. xxii. 2; xxiv. 6; Luke xiii. 33, 34.
[g] Psal. xlviii. 2; lxxxvii. 3; Deut. xii. 5; Neh. i. 9; 1 Kings xi. 30; Ezra vi. 12; Matt. iv. 5, 27, 53, &c.; Rev. xx. 9.

servants, peculiarly related to him, the chief priests and elders of his chosen people, persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dignified by him (whose office and especial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to procure houour to God and obedience to his commandments:) which as it greatly advances the goodness of him who willingly suffered there, and by such, so it much aggravates man's ingratitude and iniquity.

It follows, *crucified;* whereby is expressed the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion; which was by being affixed to a cross (that is, to a kind of gibbet or *patibulum*), mainly consisting of two beams (or pieces of wood;) one erect, to which the length of his body was applied and fastened by nails; the other transverse, to which (his arms being stretched out) his hands were nailed: which kind of suffering we may briefly consider as most bitter and painful; as most ignominious and shameful; as agreeable and advantageous to the designs of our Saviour's suffering; as significant and emblematical; as completory of divine predictions and presignifications; in fine, as instructive, admonitory of duty, and excitative of devotion, to us.

1. We may easily imagine what acerbity of pain must be endured in his limbs being stretched forth, racked, and tentered; and, continuing in that posture, in the piercing his hands and his feet (parts most exquisitely tender and sensible) with sharp, hard iron nails; so that (as it is said of Joseph) the iron entered into his soul, or his soul entered into iron, in abiding exposed to the injuries of sun scorching, wind beating upon, weather searching his grievous sores and wounds:[h] such a pain it was; and that no stupifying, no transient pain, but very acute, and withal lingering: we see, in the story, he and those that suffered with him had both presence of mind and time to discourse; three long hours and more he continued under such torment, sustaining every minute beyond the pangs of an ordinary death. So that well may that in the Lamentations be applied to his suffering state: *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.*[i] Such a kind of suffering did our Saviour choose to undergo, declaring the excess of his love (in being ready to endure the saddest afflictions and smarts for us;) signifying the heinousness of our sins (deserving so extreme punishment;) exemplifying the hardest duties of obedience and patience to us.

2. And as most sharp and afflictive in pain, so most vile and shameful was this kind of suffering. It was *servile supplicium* (*quod etiam homine libero, quamvis nocente videatur indignum*),[j] a punishment never by the Romans (under whom our Saviour suffered) legally inflicted upon freemen, but only upon slaves (such as were scarce regarded as men, or in life, having forfeited, as it were, made away, or quite lost themselves;) and among the Jews, that punishment which approached nearest, and in part agreed therewith (for they had no such cruel or inhuman kind of punishnent appointed by their law), hanging up the dead bodies of such as had been executed, was accounted most infamous and abominable: *Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree,* upon a *patibulum,* says the Law:[k] curse; that is, addicted to reproach and malediction: cursed of God (the Hebrew hath it;) that is, doth seem to be deserted and rejected and afflicted of God. In the very nature of the thing, to be raised on high, and for a good continuance of time offered to the view of all that pass by, doth beget ill suspicion, and provoke censure; invites obloquy, scorn, and contempt; draws forth language of derision, despite, and detestation (especially from the rude and hard-hearted multitude, who think and speak according to event and appearance; who *sequitur fortunam semper, et odit damnatos:* so we see that the people did mock, and jeer, and revile (ἐξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπαιζον ἐβλασφήμουν), drawing up their noses, shooting out their lips, and shaking their heads, and letting loose their tongues against him, in this condition;[l] (the same men perhaps who had former-

[h] Psal. cv. 18; Heb. et Septuag.

[i] Lam. i. 12.

[j] Lactant. iv. p. 436.

[k] Deut. xxi. 23; Gal. iii. 13.

[l] Luke xxiii. 35, 36; Matt. xxvii. 39; *vide* Psal. xxii.; Luke iv. 15; Δοξαζόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων, Matt. xxi. 9; ix. 33.]

ly admired his glorious works, and had been affected with his excellent discourses; who had followed, and favoured, and blessed, and glorified him.) *They look and stare upon me*, is a part of the description of his suffering,[m] (answering to that in St. Luke, εἱστήκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν; the people stood gazing upon him;) and θεατρίζεσθαι, to be made a gazing-stock (or object of reproach), we see, is reckoned by the apostle as an aggravation of affliction.[n] Hence became it such a scandal, &c.

Thus did our Saviour endure the cross, despising the shame;[o] (despising; that is, not simply esteeming it as no evil, but not esteeming it so great an evil, as for the avoiding it to neglect the accomplishment of his great and glorious designs.) There is in man's nature an aversation or abhorrency of disgrace, perhaps more strong than that of pain: mockings and scourgings we find joined together;[p] nor doth pain more grievously affect the animal sense, than being insulted over and despised goes against the grain of men's fancy and natural constitution of soul; and generally men will more contentedly endure one than the other. We need not therefore doubt, but our Saviour was sensible of this natural evil, and that such indignity did add some degree of bitterness and loathsomeness to his cup of affliction; yet, in consideration of the glory that would accrue to God, the benefit to us, the reward to himself, he willingly underwent it: *He became a curse for us* (was exposed to all malediction and reviling from sinful men;) *despised, and rejected, and disesteemed of men*,[q] in the prophet's language; did also seem deserted and rejected by God himself (himself in a manner concurring in such an opinion, as by his woful outcry, *Lama sabachthani*, doth appear.) [*We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*[r]] So did he become a curse for us, that we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law (that is, from that exemplary punishment due to our transgression of the Law, with the disgrace before men, and the displeasure of God attending it;) he was contented to be dealt with as a slave (as a wretched miscreant), *making himself of no reputation*,[s] that we might be free, not only from the pain, but from the ignominy we deserved, and with our lives recover both our honour and liberty, which we had forfeited and lost.

3. Further; this kind of suffering had some advantages, and did conduce toward our Saviour's design in being notorious, and in continuing a competent time. If he had been privately made away, or suddenly despatched, no such great notice had been taken of it, nor could the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved (for the confirmation of faith and conviction of infidelity), nor had that excellent deportment of his under such affliction (his most divine patience, meekness, and charity) so illustriously shone forth. God's providence, therefore, did order it so (to prevent all exceptions and excuses of unbelief), that as the course of his life, so the manner of his death should be most open and conspicuous: *These things* (as St. Paul told king Agrippa) *were not done in a corner*,[t] (nor presently hushed up; but were done leisurely, in the face of the world:) *I spoke freely* (saith our Saviour) *to the world; I always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, where the Jews from all places resort; and in secret have I done nothing.*[u] His proceedings were not close or clanculary, but frank and open; and as he lived, so he died, publicly and visibly, the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and to embrace his doctrine; according to what himself foretold: *I, being lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men unto me;*[v] (all men to take notice, by the remarkableness of it; some to believe upon me, by the wondrous consequences of it:) and, *As Moses did exalt the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted;*[w] (that as, by beholding the serpent elevated upon a pole, men were cured of those mortiferous stings they had received; so, by believing on him crucified, men should be saved from those destructive and deadly sins they had committed.)

[m] Psal xxii. 17.
[n] Luke xxiii. 35; Heb. x. 33.
[o] Heb. xii. 2.
[p] Heb. xi. 36.
[q] Gal. iii. 13; Heb. xii. 3, ἀντιγογία.
[r] Matt. xxvii. 46; Isa. liii. 3
[s] Phil. ii. 7.
[t] Acts xxvi. 26.
[u] John xviii. 20.
[v] John xii. 32.
[w] John xiii. 14, 15.

4. This kind of suffering also seems in many respects significant, and full of instructive emblems. His posture represented that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth his arms of kindness, pity, and mercy; with them, as it were, to embrace the whole world, and receive all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection:* it showed him earnestly, as it were, wooing and entreating us to return to God, and embrace the reconciliation he had purchased and did offer: *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people:*[x] God did so of old by his prophets mediately and figuratively; he did so in our Saviour immediately and properly by himself. The cross was, as it were, a pulpit, from which our Saviour did exhort to repentance, and preach divine grace, and offer remission of sins unto us, with action most affecting and pathetical.

His being lifted up may signify and mind us, that submission to God's will, suffering for truth and righteousness (humility and patience), are conjoined with and do procure exaltation: that the lower we are in humility, the higher we rise in favour, and the nearer approach to heaven: *Whoso humbleth himself* (saith our Saviour) *shall be exalted;* and, *Be you humbled before the Lord* (under the mighty hand of God), *and he shall exalt you*, say with one voice St. James and St. Peter. And because *our Saviour was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God* ὑπερυψοῦν, *superexalt him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth,*[y] as St. Paul teaches us. The cross was a throne, where humility sat in high majesty, whence patience sat encircled with rays of glory. The same consideration may also mind us how and whence our salvation comes; that our help comes from above, and by looking upward; that as in beholding our Saviour upon the cross we must lift up our eyes, so in believing on him we must raise up our hearts to heaven. In that sublimity also did our Saviour show himself standing erect, not only as a constant sufferer, but as a glorious conqueror; having, as St. Paul tells us, *spoiled principalities and powers* (all the principal powers of darkness, hell, sin, and death), ἐδειγμάτιζεν, *he made a solemn show, triumphing over them upon his cross.*[z] No conqueror loftily seated in his triumphant chariot did ever yield so illustrious a spectacle; no tree was ever clothed and adorned with so glorious trophies. To the outward eye and carnal sense, our Saviour was exposed to shame and scorn; but to spiritual discerning, all his and our enemies hung there, objects of contempt, undone, and overthrown. The devil, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς (that strong and sturdy one), hung there, bound and fettered, spoiled and disarmed, quite baffled and confounded:[a] death itself there hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled.[b] The world with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its bewitching pleasures, its fondly admired excellencies, did there hang, all defaced and disparaged; *the world is thereby crucified to us, and we unto the world;*[c] so that we cannot glory or truly rejoice in any worldly thing: (for to be splendid in external state can never henceforth be worthily deemed admirable; to be mean and low can never speak a man miserable, since the Lord of glory and fountain of happiness did himself condescend to so low a condition, and became so deep a sufferer: nor can pleasure pretend to make men happy, nor sorrow justly discourage us, since the Son of God by such a step of extreme grief hath ascended into his throne of glory.) Our sins (those sins which our Saviour did in his body ἀναφέρειν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, carry up upon the gibbet) hung there, exposed as trophies of his victories, objects of our hatred and horror, by him condemned in the flesh:[d] those manifold enmities (between God and us, between man and himself, between one man and another) did all there hang together, abolished in his flesh, and slain upon his cross; *by the blood of which he made peace, and reconciled all things in*

* *Vide* Lactant. iv. p. 437.—Extendit in passione manus suas, orbemque dimensus est, ut jam tunc ostenderet ab ortu solis usque ad occasum, magnum populum ex omnibus linguis et tribubus congregatum, sub alas suas esse venturum.

[x] Isa. lxv. 2.

[y] Luke xviii. 14; Matt. xxiii. 12; James iv. 10; 1 Pet. v. 5; Phil. ii. 8, 9.

[z] Col. ii. 15; Heb. ii. 14.

[a] Matt. xii. 29; Luke xi. 22.

[b] 1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Tim. i. 10. [c] Gal. vi. 14.

[d] 1 Pet. ii. 24; Rom. viii. 3.

heaven and earth:[e] together with all those yokes of bondage, those ensigns and instruments of vexation to us; those laws that burdened men so much, which set them at such distance and variance, that subjected them to guilt and condemnation unavoidable; that hand-writing of ordinances, inducing our obligation to so grievous forfeitures and penalties, was there nailed to the the cross; our bonds thereby cancelled, our debts expunged.*

Our Saviour's crucifixion furthermore did signify how our flesh should be dealt with, how we should mortify the lusts and affections thereof. We must not only imitate and follow our Saviour in his life, but in some sort endeavour to resemble him in his death, *συμμορφοῦσθαι τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ*, as St. Paul speaks, *conformable to his death; become σύμφυτοι, planted together with him in the likeness of his death: συσταυροῦσθαι τῷ Χριστῷ, be crucified together with Christ; having our old man crucified together with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, so that we no further serve sin; mortifying our earthly members, and putting to death the deeds of the body: For they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions, and lusts.*[f] His death may fitly represent our death to sin; his cross, the thwarting our vicious desires and inclinations; his grievous pain the bitterness of our repentance (wherein our soul should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails;) his disgrace, our shame and confusion, with regard to our offences. In his person, further, we may contemplate the state of virtue and goodness in this world, exposed to envy and hatred, to censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to all kind of affliction and hardship. Every good man must hang upon some cross or other; *εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα*, it is our lot and portion assigned us by divine decree;† to a conformity with this image and pattern of the Son of God we are predestinated;[g] *δεῖ ἡμᾶς, We must* (it is both of necessity and duty incumbent on us) *by many tribulations enter into God's kingdom;*[h] *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall* (certainly in one way or other) *suffer persecution*[i] (and partake of the cross.) Many such analogies and resemblances, not unprofitable, might a devout meditation (in imitation of the sacred writers) draw out, for exciting good affections and quickening to duty. But further,

5. We may also (for the fuller confirmation of our faith, and begetting in us a due adoration of the Divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshowing it. That most full and clear and famous prophecy concerning our Saviour's passion (Isa. liii.) doth express him suffering as a malefactor, or with malefactors. He was to be reckoned among transgressors, suffering in a manner very painful and very despicable (*He was to be wounded for our transgressions, and to be bruised for our iniquities;* he was to be *despised* and *rejected of men, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;*[j]) which circumstances could not so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering (or punishment) in use as to this. In the 22d Psalm, the royal Prophet describes an afflicted and forlorn condition (such as by no passages of his history, in the full extent and according to the literal signification of his words, doth appear suitable to his own person, and therefore more properly is to be applied to the Messias, whom he did represent; and in that description, among other passages suiting to our Saviour, these words occur: *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death: for dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced* (or digged, ὤρυξαν) *my hands and my feet;*[k] (which words do most patly and livelily set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross.) And in the Prophet Zechariah, God foretells, speaking in his own name, *They* (that is, the Jews, sensible of what they had done, and penitently affected), *they*

* Col. ii. 14, ἐξαλείψας.—Mos est quibusdam in locis clavis transfigendi edicta antiquata.—*Grot. ib.*

† Et quanquam passio ipsa per se acerba et amara, specimen nobis futurorum tormentorum dabat, quam morantibus in hoc seculo virtus ipsa proponit, &c.—*Lact.* iv. p. 434.

[e] Col. i. 20; Eph, ii. 15, 16, καταργήσας.

[f] Phil. iii. 10; Rom. vi. 5, 6, &c.; Gal. ii. 20; v. 24; Col. iii. 5; Rom. viii. 13.

[g] 1 Thess. iii. 3; Rom. viii. 29.

[h] Acts xiv. 22.

[i] 2 Tim. iii. 12.

[j] Isa. liii. 12, 5, 3.

[k] Psal. xxii. 15, 16.

shall look upon me, whom they have pierced:[l] which place needs no violence to extort the right meaning from it; no comment to explain or adapt it to the crucifixion of God, our Saviour, to which it is so literally congruous. The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types: Isaac, the immediate son and heir of the promise)in whom the faithful seed was called, or conveyed down by him), and so a most apt type of our Saviour, he being devoted and offered to God in sacrifice, did himself bear the wood, by which he was to be offered:[m] so did our Saviour (the promised seed in which *all nations should be blessed*) himself bear the cross, by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God.[n] Those which were bitten (dangerously) by fiery serpents, were by looking up upon a brazen serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life;[o] which (in our Saviour's most authentical interpretation) did represent the salvation which should proceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross, to us who had been stung and mortally struck with that old serpent's poisonous temptations. The paschal lamb (that most proper emblem of Christ our passover, that most meek and innocent, most unblemished and spotless Lamb, *slain for the sins of the world*), it was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel;[p] its blood was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its body was not to be eat raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roasted whole, and dressed upon a spit; nor were any of its bones to be broken; which circumstances (with such caution and care prescribed), how they suit and fitly adumbrate the manner of our Saviour's passion, I need not further than by the bare mention of them to declare.

Lastly, The consideration of our Saviour's thus suffering is apt to teach and affect us; to admonish us of our duty, and to excite devotion in us: no contemplation is more fruitful or efficacious toward the sanctification of our hearts and of our lives: the gospel itself is, in St. Paul's language, ὁ λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ (*the word of the cross*;) and he calls both this and that *the power of God to salvation*.[q]

1. What good affection, therefore, may not the meditation thereupon raise, what virtue not produce in us!

2. How can it otherwise than inflame our hearts with love, to think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of shame, our Saviour there willingly undertook and endured for us! No imagination can devise a greater expression of charity; and if love be productive of love, what effect should the consideration of such a love have! Nor can we find a surer ground of trust, and a greater encouragement to hope in God, than this: he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to the suffering of such pains and indignities for us, how can we distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy in any case? What higher favour could he do, how show greater condescension, how more surely testify his willingness, his delight to do us good? how consequently lay stronger grounds of hope and confidence in us, than by his own free undertaking and undergoing all this for us?

3. What detestation of our sins must it also raise in us, that brought such torture, such reproach upon him! Judas the wretch who betrayed him, the Jewish priests who accused and prosecuted him, Pilate the judge who condemned him, the wicked people that abused and insulted over him, the cruel hands that smote him, the pitiless hearts that mocked him, the blasphemous tongues that railed upon him, those who were instruments of his affliction, how do we detest them and curse their memories! But our sins, which were the first and main causes of that woful tragedy, how much more reason have we to abhor and abominate them! He was *delivered for our offences*,[r] (they were the traitors indeed which by Judas's hands did deliver him;) it was they that cried *Crucifige*, (*Crucify him! crucify him!*[s]) with a clamour more loud and more effectual than did the Jews; (it was they that did by their borrowed mouths accuse and prosecute

[l] Zech. x. 12; John xix. 37.
[m] Gen. xxii.; Rom. ix. 8; James ii. 21; Heb. xi. 17.
[n] *Vide* Tertull. adv. Jud. c. x.
[o] Numb. xxi.; John xiii. 14.
[p] Exod. xii. 5, 6; ix. 46, &c.
[q] 1 Cor. i. 18; Rom. i. 16.
[r] Rom. iv. 25.
[s] Luke xxiii. 21.

him:) *He that knew no sin was made sin for us,*[t] (was condemned as a sinner for us: it was we that by our sins did adjudge and sentence him:) Pilate was but their agent and spokesman in it: *He became a curse for us,*[u] (all the mockery, derision, and contumely he endured, proceeded from us; the silly people were but properties, representing and acting our parts:) *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:* it was they that by the fierce soldiers and rude rabble, as by senseless engines, did smite and scourge him; by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh and rend his sacred body.

4. What can in reason be more effectual to breed in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins? how can we but vehemently grieve, when we remember ourselves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the scorners, the murderers of God's dear Son, of so innocent and lovely a person, of our best friend, and most loving Saviour?

5. And if ingenuity will not work so much and melt us into contrition hereby, yet sure this thought must needs produce fear in us: Can we but tremble to think of the fierceness of God's displeasure, the severity of divine judgment, the heinous guilt of our sins, all so plainly discovered, so livelily set out in this dismal spectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget some apprehensions of terror, dread of the law, reverence to authority, what dreadful impressions should this extraordinary example of divine justice make upon us!

6. How can it also but deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider that by it we do ἀνασταυροῦν, recrucify (in a manner renew all that pain and shame; bring up again upon the stage all that direful tragedy), *crucify*, I say, *afresh the Son of God, and again expose him to open shame; that by it we trample upon the Son of God, and prize the blood of the covenant* (that most precious blood, so freely, yet so sadly shed for us) *as a common* (a trivial and worthless) *thing;*[v] despising all his so kind and so painful endeavours for our salvation, defeating his gracious purpose, rendering all his so bitter and loathsome sufferings, as to their principal intent (our good and benefit), altogether, yea more than vain and fruitless?

7. What, further, can be more operative in producing disesteem and disregard of this world, with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous pleasures; in reconciling us to the worst condition it can bring us into; in comforting us under the heaviest pressures of affliction? Who can admire those splendid trifles, which he never regarded in his life, which only served to mock him at his death? Who can relish those delights, which he never living vouchsafed to taste of, and dying chose to feel their contraries? Who will dare to vilify a state of sorrow, and disgrace, which he by the voluntary susception thereof (in such extremity), hath so dignified and graced; by which we resemble, become conformable unto, partake with him, concur with, and, in a manner, complete his design? Who can much prefer being admired, applauded, or made much of by men, before derision, reproach, or persecution from them (especially for adherence to truth and righteousness?[w]) Who can be very ambitious of honour and repute, or covetous of wealth, or addicted to pleasure, who observes him (the Son of God, the heir of all things, the Lord of glory) choosing rather to ascend a cross than a throne; inviting the clamours of spite and scorn, instead of acclamations of praise; embracing the reputation of a malefactor and a slave, before the dignity and respect of a prince; that regards him hanging naked and forlorn upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groaning under extremity of pain, yielding, as the prophet foretold of him, *his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair* (hiding not his face from shame and spitting?[x]) Will not the imagination of such a sight sully the lustre of all earthly pomps and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions; quash all the content we can take in our wild and extravagant merriments?

8. If such affliction and hardship were

[t] 2 Cor. v. 21. [u] Gal. iii. 13.
[v] Heb. vi. 6; x. 29.

[w] Rev. i. 9; 1 Pet. iv. 13; Rom. viii. 17; Phil. iii. 10; Col. i. 24, ἀνταναπληροῦν τὰ ὑστερήματα. [x] Isa. l. 6.

to him a school of obedience (ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθε, he learnt from what he suffered, obedience;) a means of perfection (*It became God*, saith the apostle, *to perfect the captain of our salvation by suffering;*[y]) a procurement of divine favour (therefore himself tells us, *The Father loveth me, because I lay down my life;*[z] and the manner sure did increase that love;) a step to glory (for, it is said, *was not Christ to suffer these things, and* (so) *to enter into his glory? Therefore God exalted him; We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.*[a]) If it yielded such advantages to him, and may by our conformity and compliance with him afford the like to us, what reason can there be, that we should be anywise discomposed, discouraged, or disconsolate under it? Much more sure there is, *that we should* (with St. Paul) *boast, rejoice, exult, and skip* (ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι and σκιρτᾶν) *for joy in our tribulations; He that doth not carry his cross, and go after me, cannot be my disciple:* and, *He that doth not take up his cross, and follow me, is not worthy of me;*[b] saith our Saviour: he that doth not take it up readily, when by providence it is presented; that doth not bear it contentedly, when it is imposed, cannot be our Saviour's disciple (showing such an incapacity to learn the lessons of humility and patience read by him; to transcribe the copies of submission to divine will, self-denial, and self-resignation, so fairly set him by Christ's instruction and example:) he is nowise worthy of him (hath not the courage, the sincerity, the constancy, required of a Christian; one pretending to such benefits, privileges, and rewards from Christ, his Lord and Saviour.) The willing susception, the cheerful sustaining of the cross, is the express condition and character of our Christianity; (whence use hath been to sign them who enter into it with the figure of the cross.) It is the special ensign of our warfare under Christ against his and our common enemies; the distinct badge of our profession; the chief object of our faith, our knowledge, our preaching (as St. Paul discourses in the first and second chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians;) the main ground of our hope; the sole matter of our glory; (ἐμοὶ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι:) *Far be it from me to glory* (saith St. Paul) *save in the cross of Christ: Let it be to the Jews a scandal,*[c] (offensive to their fancy, prepossessed with expectations of a Messias flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity;) *let it be folly to the Gentile Greeks* (seem absurd to men imbued and puffed up with carnal conceits and maxims of worldly wisdom), that God should put his own beloved Son into so sad and despicable a condition; that salvation from death and misery should be procured by so miserable a death;[d] that eternal joy, happiness, and glory, should issue from such springs of extreme sorrow and shame; that a person in outward semblance so contemptible, exposed to so infamous and slavish usage, should be the Son of God, the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the King and Judge of all the world; let this, I say, be scandalous and distasteful to some prejudiced persons; let it seem strange and incredible to other self-conceited men; to us it must be grateful and glorious; to us, who discern by a clearer light, who are endued with a purer sense, derived from the divine Spirit, whence we may, with a comfortable satisfaction of mind, perceive that God could not in a higher measure, in a fitter method, illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness and justice (his infinite mercy toward his poor creatures, his heavy indignation and severe justice against iniquity;) that virtue could not be taught, nor exemplified, nor commended and inculcated any other way with so great advantage. It were easy to allege the suffrages of Plato, Seneca, and other such men[e] (wise only by improvement of natural reason), acknowledging that perfection of virtue can neither be wrought or showed otherwise than by suffering the bitterest afflictions; that God (as a wise Father) therefore useth to exercise them whom he most loveth, with them: nor hard were it to produce examples of men (even among the pagans), most famous and honourable in the judgment of posterity for their wisdom and

[y] Heb. v. 8; ii. 10.
[z] John x. 17.
[a] Luke xxiv. 26; Phil. ii. 9; Heb. ii. 9.
[b] Rom. v. 3; Col. i. 24; Matt. v. 12; Luke vi. 23; xiv. 27; ix. 23; Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24.
[c] 1 Cor. ii. 2; Gal. vi. 14; 1 Cor. i. 23.
[d] *Vide* Orig. in Cels. ii. p. 79. &c.
[e] Plat. 2, de rep. Sen. de Provid.

virtue, who have been tried in this furnace, and shone thereby more brightly, suffering by the iniquity, ingratitude, and envy of their times, both in their reputation, liberty, and life, infamous punishments, ignominious deaths;* though none of them of choice and upon design to advance the interests of goodness, but by an accidental force put upon them; none in a manner so signal, with circumstances so rare, with an event so wonderful: so that even according to the passable dictates of common wisdom this dispensation was not so unaccountable; neither ought the Greeks, in consistency with themselves and their own most admired philosophers, have deemed the doctrine *of the cross to be foolish*, or unreasonable: since thereby a charity and humanity so unparalleled (far exceeding theirs, who have been celebrated for love to their country, or a more prevalent love of praise devoting their lives), a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical, were manifested for instruction and direction of men:† since never were vices and vanities of the world (both so destructive to the quiet and welfare of mankind) so remarkably disparaged and condemned: since never virtue had so powerful an effect (the expiation of the whole world's sin and reconciliation of mankind to God, such as no other performance, no sacrifice could ever pretend to) nor so glorious a reward; sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, everlasting happiness to them that follow it: since, I say, there be such excellent uses, fruits, and consequences of the cross undergone by our Saviour, we have no reason to be offended nor to be ashamed thereof; but rather heartily to approve, and humbly to adore, as well the wisdom of God, as other his glorious attributes, so conspicuously demonstrated and displayed therein.[f]

But I have not been able to contain myself, and have dwelt too long upon this most rich and fruitful argument.

Dead and buried, &c.

Our Saviour's passion (as we did observe formerly) was in the first draughts of this Creed expressed by one single word, *crucifixus:* but afterwards (whether to discountenance some heretical devices contradicting the real truth of our Saviour's death, or for more full and clear representation of the thing itself) its description was dilated, and expressed by three words, signifying the quality thereof (he suffered, that is, was dealt with as a malefactor;) another showing the manner of it (he underwent that most painful and disgraceful punishment of crucifixion;) a third denoting the final completion thereof (he lost his life thereby.) The two former we have largely discoursed upon; the last remains, being the consummation of his grievous passion, the bottom of that bitter cup he willingly drank off for us; foreseeing the approach of which, he pronounced the τετέλεσται, *It is finished.* Concerning which we may consider, 1. The nature of it (wherein it did consist.[g]) 2. Some peculiar adjuncts and respects thereof (which commend it to our regard, and render it considerable.) 3. The causes and ends (whence moved, and why he died.) 4. The fruits and effects of it (what did especially spring from, what consequences there were of his dying.) Lastly, The practical influences the belief and consideration thereof may or should have upon us.

I. As for the nature of it; we must affirm and believe assuredly, that it was a true and proper death, not in kind different from that death to which all we mortal men by the law and condition of our nature are subject, and must all sometime undergo: (*For what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?*[h]) that death which is signified by the cessation of vital operations (of all motion, natural or voluntary; of all sense and knowledge, appetite and passion: that death which is caused by the violent disunion or dislocation; by distempering;* by whatsoever indisposing the parts, humours, spirits of the body, so that the soul can no longer in and by them exercise those functions for which its con-

* Socrates, Phocion, Aristides, Seneca, Thraseas, Pœtus, Helvidius, Piscus, &c.

† Vicit amor patriam laudumque immensa cupido.

[f] 1 Cor. i. 18, &c.

* ——Ἐπεὶ κε πρῶτα λίπῃ λευκὰ ὀστέα θυμός·
Ψυχὴ δ' ἤΰτ' ὄνειρος, ἀποκταμένη πεπότηται.—Hom. Odys. γ. 220.

[g] John xix. 30.

[h] Psal. lxxxix. 48.

junction thereto was intended, and cannot therefore fitly reside therein: that death which is supposed to consist in the dissolution of that vital band (whatever it be) whereby the soul is linked and united to the body; or in that which is thereupon consequent, the departure, separation, and absence of the soul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home to their original principles, as it were; *the body to the earth, whence it was taken; and the spirit unto God who gave it*, as it is in the Preacher.[i] Such causes antecedent are specified in the story; such signs following are plainly implied; such a state is expressed, in the same terms, whereby our death is commonly signified. The same extremity of anguish, the same dilaceration of parts, the same effusion of blood (which would destroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, stop our animal motion, exhaust our spirits, extrude our breath) did work upon and necessarily produce the like effects upon him (as having assumed the common infirmities and imperfections of our nature;) in regard to which violences inflicted upon him, he is said to be *slain*, to be *despatched*, to be *cut off*, to be *taken away*, to be *destroyed*, to be *slaughtered*, to be *sacrificed* (ἀποκτείνεσθαι, διαχειρίζεσθαι. ἀναιρεῖσθαι, ἀπολέσθαι. σφάττεσθαι, θύεσθαι), which words fully import a real and proper death to have ensued upon those violent usages toward him.[j] And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to sense, the soldiers judged him dead; and therefore, ὡς εἶδον ἤδη τεθνηκότα, *seeing him already dead, they forbear to break his legs*;[k] by the same all the world being satisfied thereof; both his spiteful enemies, that stood with delight waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him, and his loving friends, that with compassionate respect attended upon him through the course of his suffering; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness in procuring the decent burial of his body.[l] His transition also into, and his abiding in, this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death, such as was before described: St. Mark tells us, that ἐξέπνευσε (*animam efflavit*, he *breathed out his soul*, or *breathed out his last breath*; he *expired*:[m]) St. Matthew, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα: *he let go his spirit*, or *gave up the ghost*, *animam egit*:[n]) St. John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα: he *delivered up his spirit* into God's hands:[o] St. Luke mentions it done with a formal and express resignation: *Father, into thy hands I commend* (or depose, παρατίθεμαι) *my spirit*.[p] Himself also frequently expresses his dying by *laying down his life*; by *bestowing his life a ransom*; which shows him really to have parted with it. His death likewise (as ours commonly by *excedere e vivis*, and like phrases) is termed ἔξεδος, a going out of life, a leaving the society of men, Luke ix. 31.[q] Moses and Elias are said to tell τὴν ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ, his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem; and μετάβασις, a passing over from this world: *When* (saith St. John) *Jesus knew that his time was come*, ἵνα μεταβῇ *that he should depart from this world*.[r] His death also by himself is enigmatically described by the destruction (or demolishment) of his bodily temple, answerable to those circumlocutions concerning our common death; in St. Paul, *the dissolution of our earthly house or tabernacle* (or transitory abode;[s]) in St. Peter, ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματος, the *laying down*, or *putting off*, *our tabernacle*.[t]

It were also not hard to show, how all other phrases and circumlocutions by which human death is expressed, either in the scripture, or in usual language, or indeed among philosophers and more accurate speakers, are either expressly applied, or by consequence from what is expressed appear applicable, to our Saviour: such, for instance, as these in scripture; ἀνάλυσις, being resolved into our principles, or the returning of them thither whence they came; ἀπάλυσις, a being freed, licensed, or dismissed hence;

[i] Eccl. xii. 7; Gen. iii. 19; Psal. civ. 29.
[j] Matt. xxvii. 20; Acts v. 30; Dan. ix. 26; Isa. liii. 8; John xviii. 14; xi. 50; Rev. v. 9.
[k] John xix. 33.
[l] Mark xiv. 41; Luke xxiii. 27; John. xix. 25.
[m] Mark xv. 37.
[n] Matt. xxvii. 50.
[o] John xix. 30.
[p] Luke xxiii. 46.
[q] John xv. 13; x. 15, 18, &c.; xiii. 37; 1 John iii. 16; Μετ' ἐμὲ ἔξοδον. 2 Pet. i. 15; ἄφιξιν, Acts xx. 29.
[r] John xiii. 1.
[s] 2 Cor. v. 1.
[t] 2 Pet. i. 14.

ἐκδημία ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, a going abroad, or abiding abroad; a peregrination, or absenting from the body; an ἔκδυσις, putting off, or being divested of the body; an ἀφανισμὸς, disappearing, ceasing (in appearance) to be; going hence, and not being seen; a falling on sleep; resting from labours; to sleep with his fathers; a being added unto our fathers, gathered to our people; being taken or cut out of the land of the living; going down into the pit; lying down, resting, sleeping in the dust, &c.; making our bed in darkness.[u]

These and such like phrases occurring in scripture (which might be paralleled out of common speech and more learned discourses), describing either the entrance into, or the abiding in, the state of that death to which all men are obnoxious, might easily be showed applicable to the death of our Saviour. But I will not further insist upon confirmation of a point so clear, and never questioned but by the wild and presumptuous fancies of some heretics.

Our Saviour's death, then, was a true, real, and proper death, suitable to that frail, passible, mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undertake for us; to the condition of sinful flesh, in the likeness of which he did appear;[v] separating his soul and body, and remitting them to their original sources. His passion was indeed *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme capital punishment, the highest in the last result which either the fiercest injustice or the severest justice could in this world inflict; for to *kill the body* is, as our Saviour teaches us, the extreme limit of all human power and malice;[w] the most and worst man can do; they have not περισσότερόν τι, any thing beyond that, which they can attempt upon us: and so far they proceeded with our Saviour:[x] [the willing undergoing of which also is the highest expression of kindness (if it be done upon that account;) for, *Greater love than this hath no man, than that one lay down his life for his friends:*[y] the greatest attestation to the truth; the perfect instance of obedience, submission, and patience respectively: to assert truth, to follow righteousness, to adhere to conscience, to resist sin, μέχρις αἵματος, as far as to blood (as it is in the 12th to the Hebrews), not to love our life, ἄχρι θανάτου (unto the death, when death is threatened), is the utmost that man can do.[z]] But,

II. We may consider those peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Saviour's death (annexing thereto hereafter in our discourse, for avoiding repetition, his whole passion generally taken, whereof his death was the chief part and final completion;) those adjuncts, I say, and those respects which commend it to our regard, and amplify the worth thereof; its being a result of God's eternal deliberation and decree; a matter of free consent and compact between God the Father and his only Son; its being anciently prefigured and predicted; its being executed by God's hand and providence guiding, by man's action concurring; its being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so high and excellent; of the Son of God, yea, of God himself.

1. It was a result of God's eternal counsel and decree; no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised; but a design from all eternity, contrived by divine wisdom, resolved upon by divine goodness: as God did then foresee our lapse and misery, so he did as soon determine our remedy; as the whole of that mysterious dispensation concerning Christ, so did especially this main part thereof, proceed κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων, according to an eternal purpose:[a] for our Saviour was *a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: We were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot;* προεγνωσμένου μὲν, *fore-ordained indeed before the foundation of the world:*[b] our Saviour went (he tells us) to suffer κατὰ τὸ ὡρισμένον, according to what was determined; it was *by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,*[c] that

[u] 2 Tim. iv. 6; Phil. i. 23; Luke ii. 29; 2 Cor. v. 8, 4; Acts xiii. 36; Gen. xxv. 8; xlix. 33, &c.; Psal. xxxi. ult. &c.; Jer. xi. 19; Psal. lii. 5; xxviii. 1; cxliii. 7; lxxxviii. 4; Isa. xxxviii. 18; Ezek. xxvi. 20, &c.; Job vii. 21; xvii. 16; xx. 11; xxi. 26; Dan. xii. 2; Isa. xxvi. 19.

[v] Rom. viii. 3.

[w] Matt. x. 28.

[x] Luke xii. 4.

[y] John xv. 13.

[z] Heb. xii. 4; Rev. xii. 11.

[a] Eph. iii. 11.

[b] Rev. xiii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

[c] Acts ii. 23.

he was delivered up to those wicked hands that slew him: nor did the conspiracy of Herod and Pilate with the nations and people of the Jews effect any thing therein beyond ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ, καὶ ἡ βουλὴ Θεοῦ προώρισε γενέσθαι, whatever the hand and the counsel of God had predestinated to be performed.[d] God's so great care and providence, so expressly commended to our observation, do argue the high worth and consequence of this death.

2. It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and our Saviour. God freely proffered, if he would undertake to redeem his creature, a comfortable and honourable success thereto; he willingly embraced the condition: *When thou shalt make thy soul an offering, thou shalt see thy seed and prolong thy days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand: thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul, and be satisfied;*[e] that was God's proposition: *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,*[f] was our Saviour's answer in correspondence and consent thereto. God, in consideration of his sufferings, did διατίθεσθαι βασιλείαν, covenant to him a kingdom; commit to him a sovereign authority, assign him an universal dominion:[g] in virtue of which transaction it was, that *Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour;*[h] that *he pouring out his soul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great;* that *he being obedient to the death, God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names.*[i] In this regard are God's elect and faithful people said to be given to him, as a retribution to him who gave himself for them; that we are said *to be bought by him, and the church purchased by his blood.* There was therefore a covenant between God and his Son concerning this affair: and of great consideration surely must that affair be, wherein such Persons (if I may so speak) so interest themselves; do traffic, as it were, and stand upon terms with each other.[j]

3. Further; that the excellency and efficacy of this death and passion might appear, it was by manifold types foreshadowed, and in divers prophecies foretold. Indeed most famous passages of providence (especially the signal afflictions of eminent persons representing our Saviour) seem to have been preludes unto, and prefigurations of, his passion: the blood of the righteous protomartyr Abel, shed by envy for acceptable obedience to God's will, and crying for vengeance, seems to have prefigured that blood, which cried also, though with another voice, and *spake better things than the blood of Abel;*[k] not complaints and suits for vengeance, but entreaties and intercessions for mercy.[l] Isaac (the only son, the son of promise), his oblation in purpose, and death in parable (as the apostle to the Hebrews speaks), did plainly represent our Saviour, the promised seed, his being really offered, and afterward restored to life.[m] Joseph's being sold and put into slavery by his envious brethren; being slanderously accused and shut in prison (*whose feet they hurt with fetters; the iron entered into his soul;*[n]) and this by God's disposal, in order to his exaltation, that he might be a means to preserve life, and prepare convenient habitation for the children of Israel, doth resemble him who by suffering entered into glory; who being thereby perfected, became author of salvation to his brethren, all true Israelites; who went to prepare mansions of rest and light, a heavenly Goshen, for them.[o] David's persecutions preceding his royal dignity and prosperous state (which he expresses in no lower strain than by saying, *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid: the sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me,*[p]) how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Saviour's affliction, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to consider; as also the rest of such passages, of a like mysterious importance: however, all the sacrifices of old, instituted by God, we may more confidently affirm

[d] Acts iv. 28.
[e] Isa. liii. 10, 11.
[f] Heb. x. 7, 8.
[g] Luke xxii. 29.
[h] Heb. ii. 9.
[i] Isa. liii. 12; Phil. ii. 8, 9.
[j] Rom. i. 4; Gal. iii. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Pet. i. 19; Acts xx. 28.
[k] Luke xi. 51; Gen. iv. 10.
[l] Heb. xii. 24; xi. 4.
[m] Heb. xi. 17, 19, ἐν παραβολῇ.
[n] Psal. cv. 18.
[o] Gen. xlv. 5; Luke xxiv. 26; Heb. v. 9; John xiv. 2.
[p] Psal. xviii. 4, 5.

to have been chiefly preparatory unto and prefigurative of this most true and perfect sacrifice; by virtue, indeed, of which, those ὑποδείγματα and σκιαι, those umbratic representations, obtained any validity or effect;[q] if they did not signify this in design, they could signify nothing in effect; for as *without shedding of blood there was no remission*,[r] (God's anger could not be appeased, his justice could not be satisfied without it; it being blood that maketh atonement for the soul, God so requiring, as it is in the law, Levit. xvii. 11), which the institution of those sacrifices did speak and signify; so it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin; that those legal gifts and sacrifices should perfect the conscience of him that did the service;[s] that is, entirely assure him of pardon and impunity. The souls of beasts were not in value suitable, could not fitly be surrogated in the stead of men's souls, which had offended, and were therefore liable to death: the effusion of their blood could not reasonably satisfy a man's conscience, sensible of guilt, and fearful of God's displeasure, that by it God was fully appeased: they must therefore refer unto a better sacrifice, more sufficient in itself, more acceptable to God, in virtue of, in respect to which, sin might be thoroughly expiated, God's vengeance removed, man's mind comforted and contented.[t] The high priest's solemn entrance, once a year, into the holy of holies, not without blood, to atone for his own and the people's ignorances, did imply that our great High Priest should make a bloody atonement for the sins of mankind, and passing through the veil of mortal flesh, should enter into the true *sancta sanctorum* of heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us.[u] The Paschal lamb especially, in its substance (as a lamb, meek and gentle;) in its quality, without blemish or spot (holy and innocent;[v]) in its manner of preparation and dressing (being killed by all the assembly, having its blood sprinkled upon the doors of every house; being roasted with fire; having bitter herbs for its sauce;) with other observable circumstances, was a most apposite emblem of Christ our Passover, who not only by his death did signify and mind us of, but really effect, our deliverance from the mystical Egypt, our state of spiritual bondage. So did ancient types exhibit; and plain predictions also did express the same death and suffering of our Saviour: *Those things* (saith St. Peter) *which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled:*[w] not one prophet only, but all (either plainly or covertly, either directly or by consequence) have showed it: it is our negligence or stupidity, if we do not discern it: *O fools, and slow of heart* (saith our Saviour) *to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ* (according to their predictions) *to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?*[x] That David, an illustrious representative of the Messias, doth often, as belonging to himself, describe mortal agonies and suffering, not applicable κατὰ λέξιν, in direct historical meaning, to his own person, and therefore in reason, according to a higher and truer sense, to be understood of the Messias; that Daniel expressly foretells both the thing and the time, that and when, the Messias should be cut off; that Isaiah in several places doth insinuate, and in the famous fifty-third chapter of Isaiah doth clearly describe, the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that the Jews themselves have acknowledged there must be one Messias to suffer, as another to triumph and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend the consistency between antecedent suffering and consequent glory,[y] (between a night of darkness and sorrow, and a day of light and joy breaking out from it;) not to distinguish between an external pomp in this, and an eternal majesty in the future state. But to us God's so forward care, by the Spirit of Christ in his prophets, προμαρτύρεσθαι, as St. Peter speaks, to *forewitness*[z] (to *testify* beforehand) the sufferings of our Saviour, and the glories succeeding, doth imply with what attention we should regard, with what firmness of faith embrace, this article.

[q] Heb. ix. 23; viii. 5.
[r] Heb. ix. 22.
[s] Heb. x. 4; ix. 9, 15.
[t] Heb. ix. 23.
[u] Heb. ix. 7; x. 24.
[v] Exod. xii.
[w] Acts iii. 18.
[x] Luke xxiv. 25, 26; *vide* Luke xviii. 31; Acts xxvi. 22; xiii. 27; *vide* Psal. xxii. cix, &c.; lxxii.
[y] Luke xxii. 13.
[z] 1 Pet. i. 11.

4. We may consider also that this death was executed by God's especial providence directing and disposing it; though not without man's active concurrence. The treacherous disposition and covetous appetite of Judas; the envious humour and blind zeal of the priests; the wanton fickleness and wild rudeness of the people; the fearful and selfish temper of the governor, were but instruments, by which God's own hand did inflict this sore chastisement upon his own Son for us; it was the Lord that *laid upon him the iniquities of us all;* by God he *was stricken, smitten, and afflicted.* The Jews with their rulers proceeded rashly and ignorantly, but God advisedly did accomplish it (as St. Peter in the Acts:[a]) he did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us: he suspended his bowels of pity (as it were), he withdrew his face of kindness from him, out of mercy and benignity to us; he used him severely, that he might deal favourably with us. Yet did man also actively concur herein; all mankind (by their representatives, as it were) was involved, as in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by which, he suffered: there was a general conspiracy practised of Jew and Gentile against the life of their Saviour: *Of a truth* (saith St. Peter) *against thy holy child, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and with the people of Israel.*[b] In the Jews, man's horrid ingratitude, in the Gentiles, his wretched infirmity did appear; which by their active efficacy did signify the meritorious influence they had; that it was man's iniquity and infirmity which did cause our Saviour's death: which thus, as a work of divine Providence (the most admirable work ever done by Providence), as an act of human pravity (the most heinous act ever committed by man), is considerable.

5. But immediately the quality and condition of our Saviour's person do most commend and advance the worth of his death: *If* (as the Psalmist sings) *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;*[c] if the spotless candour, the unblemished integrity of a lamb, do make its blood precious, render it a fit and acceptable sacrifice; how valuable shall the death of a person so holy and innocent, *who did not so much as know sin, in whose mouth no guile was ever found,*[d] who was removed (at infinite distance) from sinners! If the life of a king be, as David's people told him, worth ten thousand lives, and it be high treason to imagine his death;[e] how considerable must the death be of a person so transcendent in dignity, *the Lord of glory, the Prince of Life! Ye denied the Holy and the Just One; ye slew the Prince of life: They crucified the Lord of glory:*[f] so the apostles aggravate the business. But an infinity of worth and efficacy must needs accrue to the death of our Saviour, from his being the Son of God, from his being God. That the immortal God should die, the Most High so debased, as it cannot be heard without wonder, so it could not be done without huge reason and mighty effect: well might one drop of that royal blood of heaven suffice to purchase many worlds, to ransom innumerable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of sins.

III. But let us consider the causes moving to it, and the ends designed thereby; together with the effects consequent thereupon (those in nature being either the same, or joined with the ends thereof.) The determining it by God, the undertaking of it by our Saviour, were acts most absolutely free and voluntary. On the Father's part: *It pleased the Lord to bruise him,* saith the prophet: *Behold, I come to do thy will;*[g] (that is, to offer, not the blood of beasts in sacrifice, but my own body, *according to thy will,* as it is expounded in the Epistle to the Hebrews:[h]) *This command* (saith our Saviour) *I received of my Father,* viz. *to lay down my life:* and, *The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?* On our Saviour's part: *None* (saith he) *taketh my life from me* (it is by no necessity or compulsion;) *but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and have power to resume*

[a] Acts iv. 28; Isa. liii. 6, 4; Acts xiii. 27; 1 Cor. ii. 8; Acts iii. 17; Luke xxiii. 34; Rom. viii. 32.
[b] Acts iv. 27.
[c] Psal. cxvi. 15; lxxii. 14; 1 John iii. 5; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 22.
[d] Heb. vii. 26.
[e] 2 Sam. xviii. 3; xxi. 17.
[f] Acts iii. 14, 15; 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[g] Isa. liii. 10; Psal. xl. 7, 9.
[h] Heb. x. 7.

it:[i] and, *The bread which I shall give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*:[j] *The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many.*[k] The yielding of his flesh to death was a gift absolutely free: *Who gave himself for our sins, according to the will of God and our Father.*[l]

Thus did this death proceed from the joint wills of God and his Son: yet as the volitions of every wise and understanding agent are in a manner determined or directed by some cause (and grounded upon some reason), so the causes and reasons of these voluntary acts in scripture are declared to have been several. The main impulsive causes were two (one internally disposing, the other externally inviting), God's goodness, and man's distress. Mankind lying in a sad and forlorn estate; enslaved to sin, oppressed by Satan, subject to a rigorous law, exposed to the severity of justice, tormented by the sense of guilt, fearful of divine wrath and vengeance; in short, condemned by the sentence of heaven, and by the suffrage of his own conscience, to punishment unavoidable, to misery intolerable; he, I say, lying in so desperately uncomfortable a condition, God's infinite goodness regarded his poor creature; his bowels of compassion yearned toward him; thence was he moved to provide such a remedy sufficient and suitable to his delivery, for the curing all those distempers, the removing all those mischiefs. The main spring of all this wonderful performance (as of all other providential dispensations and actions *ad extra*) was that most excellent perfection of God; which in respect to this matter is sometimes termed χρηστότης, benignity, or bounty (implying the great benefit we receive thence;[m]) sometimes favour or grace (signifying the pure freeness in dispensing it, without any desert on our part:[n] *By the grace of God, he tasted death for every man;*) sometimes love and philanthrophy (intimating the regard God had to us as his creatures, and as capable of being benefited and bettered by him:[o] *Herein God commends his love toward us, in that we being yet sinners Christ died for us: Christ loved us, and delivered up himself an offering and sacrifice to God;*[p]) sometimes mercy, (connoting our bad deserts, our obnoxiousness to justice and punishment;) sometimes pity, (signifying the need we had thereof, our misery and distress.) Such were the impulsive causes, disposing and occasioning: to which we may add our sins as the meritorious cause: *He died for our sins; He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him*:[q] he died for us, not as men only not as miserable, but as sinners: had we been guiltless, there had wanted sufficient cause and just reason of his death: God would not have been angry, justice could have had no pretence or hold; we should not have suffered ourselves, nor could he have suffered for us: *Death is the debt* (the wages) *due to sin;* which he therefore paid, because we owed and could not discharge it:[r] *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and* (therefore) *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*[s]

As for the ends aimed at, and the effects produced hereby, they are in the scripture account and expression reckoned various; principally these:—

1. The illustrations of God's glory (by demonstrating and displaying his most excellent attributes and perfections: *whom God* (saith St. Paul) *hath set forth a propitiation,* εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, *for a demonstration of his righteousness;*[t] that is, of his goodness, his justice, his sincerity, his constancy, and all such laudable perfections, which may be used in dealing with others; for so I take *righteousness* to signify.)

2. The dignifying and exaltation of our Saviour himself; by acquiring unto him (as it were) a new right unto, and instating him in, an universal dominion; in a transcendent glory, joy, and happiness, accruing to him by desert and reward: *For* to *this end* (St. Paul tells us) *Christ died,* ἵνα νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυ-

[i] John x. 18; xviii. 11; x. 18.
[j] John vi. 51.
[k] Matt. xxi. 28.
[l] Gal. i. 4.
[m] Tit. iii. 4.
[n] Rom. iii. 24; 2 Cor. viii. 9.
[o] Heb. ii. 9; John iii. 16; Tit. iii. 4, 5, &c.
[p] Rom. v. 8; Eph. v. 2.
[q] 1 Cor. xv. 3; 1 Pet. iii. 18; Heb. x. 12; Isa. liii. 5, 6; Rom. v. 8, 9, &c.
[r] Rom. vi. 23.
[s] Isa. liii. 6.
[t] Rom. iii. 25i

ρευσῃ, *that he might be Lord of the dead and living;*[u] for the suffering of death he was *crowned with glory and honour;* the Prince of our Salvation was *perfected by suffering; for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross:*[v] he *was obedient unto death; therefore God exalted him:*[w] it was agreed and designed that he should see the *travail of his soul, and be satisfied.*[x]

3. The salvation of mankind; *thereby redeeming us*, as St. Paul speaks (or buying us out), *from the curse of the law* (procuring indemnity and impunity for us), justifying us in God's sight, and reconciling us to God's favour:[y] *Being justified* (saith the same apostle) *by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath: For if, being enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son:*[z] bearing, taking away, expiating, abolishing, procuring pardon for, *purging the conscience from*, cleansing us from the stain, and freeing us from the power of sin and *dead works:*[a] *But now* (saith the author to the Hebrews) *once in the end of the world hath he appeared,* εἰς ἀθετήσιν ἁμαρτίας, *to the putting away* (or abolition) *of sin by the sacrifice of himself:*[b] and, *The blood of Christ* (saith St. John) *cleanseth us from all sins:* and, *Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* and, *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world:*[c] *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:*[d] *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of* (who shall criminate, τίς ἐγκαλέσει) *God's elect? who shall condemn? It is Christ that died.*[e] In subordination unto, coincidence or concurrence with these ends, our Saviour also died, for the reparation of God's honour, recovery of his right, and satisfaction of his justice; for the ratifying the new covenant between God and us; (whence his blood is called *the blood of the covenant*, or new testament;) for the reconciling and pacifying *all things in heaven and earth;* removing all causes of dissension, inducing obligations of concord and charity; for pulling out the sting, and removing the terror of death; suppressing and *triumphing over the powers of hell: destroying* (or defeating) *him that had the power of death, the Devil; and delivering them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to death;*[f] for engaging us to all righteousness and obedience (especially to the most excellent and most difficult parts thereof, charity, meekness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and perseverance), both from our obligation for what he did, and in imitation of his example; lastly, for attestation unto and confirmation of divine truth; sealing his heavenly doctrine by his blood, and witnessing before Pontius Pilate a good confession. Such ends did the death and passion of our Saviour aim at, such fruits did grow from it; which the time hath permitted me scarce cursorily to mention.[g]

As for the practical influences the belief and consideration thereof should have upon us, they are many and great.

It should oblige us to the highest degree of love and thankfulness, in regard to this highest expression of love to us: it should beget in us the greatest *faith and hope in God;* for that, *He which did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up* (to death) *for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*[h] it should work contrition and repentance in us for those sins which murdered our so good friend and loving Saviour: it should deter and make us carefully to avoid them, as those which in a manner exact another death from him, and crucify him afresh, and *vilify the precious blood of the covenant:*[i] should discover to us their heinousness, and produce in us a vehement detestation and dread of them; as having provoked God to such a degree of displeasure; causing him to deal so severely with his own most dear Son: *For if those things were done* (such punishments were inflicted) *upon a green tree* (upon a person so innocent, so precious, so little liable to the fire

[u] Rom. xiv. 9. [v] Heb. ii. 9, 10; xii. 2.
[w] Phil. ii. 8, 9. [x] Isa. liii. 11.
[y] Gal. iii. 13, ἐξηγόρασεν.
[z] Rom. v. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 24. [a] Heb. ix. 27.
[b] John i. 29; Heb. x. 4.
[c] 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5; Gal. i. 4.
[d] Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 18. [e] Rom. viii. 34.

[f] Col. ii. 15; Heb. ii. 14, 15, καταργήσας.
[g] 1 Tim. vi. 13; John xviii. 37.
[h] John xv. 13; Rom. viii. 32.
[i] Heb. vi. 6; x. 29.

of vengeance), *what shall be done to the dry* (to us, that are so guilty, so combustible), if we presume to displease God?[j] it should engage us to a patient submission and resignation of ourselves to God's will and providence: *Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, we should arm ourselves likewise with the same mind*,[k] as St. Peter advises; and prepare for the deepest mortification, in conformity to his death, dying after him *to the lusts and affections of the flesh*, to the fashions and delights of the world; to the fullest measure of charity: *For if God so loved us* (so as to die for us), *then ought we* (as St. John tells us) *to love one another*, in a degree answerable; for, he adds, *If he laid down his life for us, then ought we also to lay down our lives for our brethren*:[l] in fine we are hereby obliged to yield up ourselves wholly to the service of our Saviour; to the promoting of his interest and glory; since, as St. Paul teaches us, *we are not our own, being bought with a price*; and therefore *must glorify God in our body and in our spirits, which are God's*;[m] (by a purchase so dear and precious;) since, as he again tells us, *Christ died for all, that they which live might not live to themselves, but to him that died for them*;[n] since, as St. Peter urges, *we know that we are not redeemed by things corruptible, by silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish or spot*,[o] from our vain conversation.

Buried. He descended into Hell.

These two particulars (which in the ancient Roman Creed, and in all the oriental forms, as also in other more ancient summaries of Christian doctrine) do appear either to have been conjoined and comprehended in the former of them (*buried*), or at least the latter to have been wholly omitted; it being afterwards inserted here out of the Aquileian form (which in a manner had it, in the room of the former, that saying, instead of *sepultus est, descendit inferna*), or from elsewhere (the latter ages mentioning both, either for more fulness and security, that nothing anywise material, touched in scripture, concerning our Saviour's person or performances, especially done in that great season of action preceding his last farewell to this world, might seem neglected), or perchance upon occasion of (in favour to, or compliance with) some opinions about our Saviour's doings in the interval between his death and resurrection, current and passable in those times: these particulars, however, I say, may seem added in respect chiefly (for the clearer illustration and surer confirmation) of those great articles precedent and subsequent concerning our Saviour's death and resurrection. For (as to the first) our Saviour's body being committed to the grave, the common repository of bodies, it plainly demonstrates the truth of his death, the reality and wonderfulness of his resurrection. No life could continue in a body shut up under ground till the third day: (sequestered from that air which ventilates and keeps from smothering our vital flame; from that comfortable light which excites and cherishes our natural heat; from that food which sustains and repairs our decaying parts;) therefore he must, being thus lodged in the chambers of death, be really dead: and to raise him thence, to rear the temple of his body from that utmost state of dejection, must be a work of divine and most wonderful power. And to this purpose, I suppose, St. Paul mentions our Saviour's burial as a point which, among other great articles of our religion, he did use to preach and inculcate as a matter of faith: *I delivered unto you first of all* (saith he to the Corinthians) *that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins; and that he was buried, and that he rose again according to the scriptures*.[p] His burial interceding gave light and confirmation to his death foregoing, and his resurrection following it, according to the scriptures, St. Paul adds: for it had seemed good to God both by typical representation to foreshow and expressly to foretell our Saviour's interment; *as Jonas* (saith he himself, the best expositor

[j] Luke xxiii. 31.
[k] 1 Pet. iv. 1; Phil. ii. 5.
[l] 1 John iv. 11; iii. 16; Phil. iii. 10; 1 Pet. iv. 2; Rom. vi. 5, 6, &c.; Gal. ii. 20; v. 24.
[m] 1 Cor. vi. ult. [n] 2 Cor. xv. 5.
[o] 1 Pet. i. 18.
[p] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

of God's meaning in such mystical adumbrations) *was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth:*[q] the whale's belly Jonas himself terms the belly of hell, (*Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice:*[r] the belly of hell, or the grave:) and, *My flesh* (saith David, as representing our Saviour) *shall rest in hope; for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*[s] The grave was the bed wherein our Saviour's flesh did rest in expectation soon to rise again before any corruption should seize thereon: and the prophet Isaiah treating upon his passion, with the causes, the manner, the consequences thereof, doth not omit the mention of this point: *For* (says he) *he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.** So God preordained, and so predicted concerning our Saviour's burial, for the confirmation of our faith, though perhaps other ends might fall in therewith, and other not inconsiderable uses may be made thereof. He did thereby yield a further instance of condescension, a final submission to the law of human nature, in being brought to the dust, and returning to the ground, according to the general doom pronounced once upon mankind: *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.*[t] He represented thereby, as the first-fruits from the dead, and the pattern of his followers, the common manner how, and whence we shall arise: *when the time comes, that all which are in the graves shall hear his voice, and go forth,*[u] as it is in the Gospel: how all men being, as it were, sown in the ground, shall spring up again to another life. He did also thereby signify that mystical sepulture, which we undergo in baptism, being therein buried with him, as St. Paul speaks, being secluded from the pleasures of sin, and having the vanities of the world removed from our eyes:[v] the immersion in baptism was a kind of burial, and its being done thrice (according to primitive use) corresponded (as the ancients suppose) to our Saviour's lying three days in the grave: Τὸ γὰρ καταδύσαι τὸ παιδίον ἐν τῇ κολυμβήθιῳ τρίτον, καὶ ἀναστήσαι, τοῦτο δηλοῖ τὸν θάνατον, καὶ τὴν τριήμερον ἀνάστασιν τοῦ Χριστοῦ: that the child doth enter thrice into the font, and rises up again; this represents the death and resurrection after three days of Christ, saith Athanasius: and,—*Illa tertio repetita demersio typum Dominicæ exprimit sepulturæ, per quam Christo consepulti estis in baptismo:* that demersion thrice repeated expresses a type of our Lord's burial, as by which we are together buried with Christ in baptism, saith St. Augustin. It also doth countenance and commend unto us those seemly respects (those offices of humanity) which all civil people have consented to perform towards the bodies of our brethren departed from us; in decently laying up their remainders; securing them from offence and disgrace;* showing by our best regard to what is left of them the good-will we bare them living, the good hope we have of them dead; as expecting to recover that *depositum* so carefully laid up by us. We see our Saviour was not unconcerned herein; and did commend to the everlasting esteem of posterity the pious respect of that good woman, who spent the precious ointment upon him, as having reserved it for his burial. As for the manner of our Saviour's burial; that his body was by Pilate's grant, upon the petition of an honourable counsellor, rescued from the cross (where, according to the rigour of the Roman law, it was to abide till its consumption), that no further ignominy or injury should be offered unto him, after he had fully satisfied the will and justice of God, in undergoing such extremities of pain and disgrace for our redemption:[w] that another good ruler, well affected to his person and doctrine, had prepared and did bring a plentiful and precious mixture of spices, wherewith (according to the manner of the Jews towards persons of wealth and respect), for decency and convenience (to preserve the dead bodies from noisome savour, and to prevent sudden corruption),

* Isa. liii. 9.—Δώσω τοὺς πονηροὺς ἀντὶ τῆς ταφῆς αὐτοῦ LXX.; δώσει, Heb.

[q] Matt. xii. 24.

[r] Jonas ii. 2.

[s] Psal. xvi. 9, 10.

[t] Gen. iii. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 20.

[u] John v. 28, 29.

[v] Col. i. 12; Rom. vi. 4.

* Γῖρας θανόντων.—Corpora terræ Mandemus, qui solus honos Acheronte sub imo est.—*Hom. Od.* ω.

[w] John xii. 7; Matt. xxvi. 10, &c.

to anoint his body: that his body was wrapped up in fine linen clothes, and laid in a new fair tomb, hewed out of a rock (or stony ground), was therein enclosed, a great stone being rolled upon the entrance thereof (God thus ordering it, that all befitting honour should be done to that sacred body, which had borne so much for us, and served God so well; that the glorious temple of the Divinity should not be profaned or polluted in any manner unseemly; that the grand miracle of raising our Saviour to life should come off with most advantage.) These things, plainly described in the gospel, might afford matter of profitable observation and discourse; but I cannot well insist upon them; but proceed.

He descended into hell, κατελθόντα εἰς ᾅδου. This article (or point of doctrine), as was before noted, is of a later standing in the Creed; and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones, public or private (excepting that of Aquileia, into which also perhaps it might have come not long before Ruffinus's time;) and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the Fathers, and in the middle times afterwards among the schoolmen, and lately among modern writers), been much debated, having given occasion to many prolix and accurate discourses: to recite the different opinions and explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater pain and time than I can afford; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than I could hope to achieve. I could therefore (both upon these accounts, as also because I chose to insist rather upon matters more clear in their nature, and practical in consequence;) I could therefore, I say, willingly waive this obscure and perplexed subject; yet however, to comply somewhat with expectation, I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming conducible to the clearing or ending of the controversies hereabout.

Now whereas there may be a threefold inquiry, either concerning the meaning of the words (here set down) intended by those who inserted them; or concerning the most proper signification of the words themselves; or concerning the meaning they are with truth capable of in the case to which they here are applied:

1. The first I resolve (or rather remove) by saying, that it seems needless and endless to dispute what meaning they (which placed these words here) did intend; since, 1. It is possible (and might be declared so by many like instances), and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others, this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof; as we believe all the scriptures, and commend them to the faith of others, without understanding the sense of many passages therein: and since, 2. Perhaps they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then prevalent, but not built upon any sure foundations: and since, 3. To speak roundly, their bare authority, whoever they were (for that doth not appear), could not be such as to oblige us to be of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend. We may owe much reverence, but no entire credence to their opinions. Yet, 4. If I were bound to speak my thought, I must confess, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did mean to say, that our Saviour's soul did, by a true and proper kind of motion, descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth; where they conceived the souls of men were detained: for this appears to have been the more general and current opinion of those times, which it is probable they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

As to the second inquiry, concerning the signification of the words, what may be meant by *he descended;* whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body, called *he* by synecdoche: what by *descended;* whether (to omit that sense which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the purpose;) whether, I say, by *descending* may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below: what by *hell;* whether a state of being, or a place;

if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones; or indifferently, and in common, of both those; for such a manifold ambiguity these words have (or are made to have;) and each of these senses are embraced and contended for: I shall not examine any of them, nor further meddle in the matter, than by saying,

1. That the Hebrew word *sheol* (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word *hell* in this place is confessed to depend) doth seem originally, most properly, and most frequently (perhaps constantly, except when it is translated, as all words sometimes are, to a figurative use) to design the whole region pretended downward from the surface of the earth to a depth (according to the vulgar opinion, as it seems, of all ancient times over the world) indefinite and inconceivable; vastly capacious in extension, very darksome, desolate, and dungeon-like in quality (whence it is also styled frequently the *pit*, the *abyss*, the *darkness*, the *depths of the earth*, &c.) I need not labour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since it is obvious that this *sheol* (when most absolutely and properly taken, the circumstances of the discourse implying so much) is commonly opposed to heaven, not only in situation, but in dimension and distance; as when Job, speaking of the unsearchableness of the divine perfections, saith, *It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?* and the prophet Amos, *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up into heaven, thence will I bring them down.*[c] I say further,

2. Because the bodies (that is, the visible remainders) of men dying do naturally fall down, or are put into the bosom of this pit (which is therefore an universal grave and receptacle of them), therefore to die is frequently termed καταβαίνειν εἰς ᾅδου, or κατάγεσθαι εἰς ᾅδου, to descend, or to be brought down into this hell; which happening unto all men without exception (for, as the Psalmist says, *there is no man that shall deliver his soul* (or life, or himself) *from the hand* (or from the clutches) *of* this all-grasping *hell*,[e]) therefore it is attributed promiscuously to all men, to good and bad alike: *I will go down* (saith good Jacob) *unto the grave* (to *sheol*, this common grave of mankind, καταβήσομαι εἰς ᾅδου) *unto my son mourning*; and so frequently of others.[a] Whence this hell is apt figuratively to be put for, and signify equivalently with, death itself (it is once by the LXX. so translated, and by St. Peter, it seems, after them), or for the law, condition, and state thereof.[b] I say further,

3. That this word seems not in the ancient use to signify the place whither men's souls do go, or where they abide; for that,

(1.) It can hardly be made appear that the ancient Hebrews either had any name appropriate to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly which way they went; otherwise than that, as the Preacher speaks, *they returned unto God who gave them*;[c] that they abode in God's hand (especially the souls of the just, as we have it in Wisdom: *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them*, &c.[d]) And for that,

(2.) It is probable they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, did go upward than downward; as the same Preacher intimates, differencing the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts:[e] that with its body descending, this ascending, as it were, unto God, to be disposed according to his pleasure and justice. And by Enoch's *being taken unto God* (whose special residence is expressed to be *in heaven above*), and by Elias's translation *upward into heaven* (as it is in the history), it seems they might rather suppose the souls of the

[c] Ἄβυσσος. Βάθεστον ὑπὸ χθονὸς βίρεθρον. Νερτέριος κευθμών. Βοθρὸς ᾅδου, Ecclus. xxi. 11; μυχὸς ᾅδου, Ecclus. xvii. 14; ἀπώλεια, Prov. xxvii. 20; διαφθορὰ, Psal. xv. 10; cvii. 10; lxxxviii. 6; cxliii. 3; Eccl. vi. 4; Job xvii. 13; 1 Sam. ii. 9; Psal. lxxi. 20; Prov. ix. 18; Job. xi. 8; Amos ix. 2; *vide* Psal. cxxxix 8; Deut. xxxii. 22; Isa. lvii. 9.

[e] Psal. lxxxix. 48.

[a] Gen. xxxvii. 35; xliv. 29, 31.

[b] 2 Sam. xxii. 6; Acts ii. 24; Isa. xxxviii. 18.

[c] Eccl. xii. 7.

[d] Wisd. iii. 1; Deut. xxxiii. 3

[e] Eccl. iii. 21.

righteous to ascend, than to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns;[e] those μυχοὶ that βόθρος ᾅδου (those *closets*, that *deep pit of hell*, as the son of Sirach and the book of Wisdom do call them;) to ascend, I say, into consortship and society with the blessed angels, who are described to attend upon God's throne in heaven, to the family of God in heaven, to that heavenly country, which they are said to desire earnestly, the heavenly Jerusalem.[f] I add,

(3.) That, if those ancients had by *sheol* meant the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions: *The grave* (sheol) *cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth;*[g] so Hezekiah: *In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave* (in sheol again) *who shall give thee thanks;* so David: and the Preacher more fully; *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave* (in sheol) *whither thou goest:*[h] (it were much he should say so, if by *sheol* he meant the place of souls; except he should mean that souls after death were deprived of all life and sense.)

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word ᾅδης was assumed by the Jews to design (as among the Greeks) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain for their evil lives here: (Josephus is observed often to use the word in the first of these senses; and in the New Testament it seems peculiarly applied to the latter; as in the parable of the rich man, *who being* ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ, *in hell torments*, did thence *lift up his eyes, and behold afar off Lazarus in Abraham's bosom:*[i] but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word *sheol;* especially considering how the Jews, after the prophetical days, in their dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did somewhat improve in knowledge, and borrowed both notions and expressions from elsewhere; which expressions our Saviour and his apostles would not depart from, when they were agreeable or accommodable to truth. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense in general of this principal word in the proposition, and of the rest depending thereupon, as to their importance here; as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning, whereof the words are truly capable here; I answer briefly,

1. That if we interpret this *descent into hell* of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in the bosom of that general grave we speak of; or if (which little differs from that) we take these words for a phrase (taking its ground thence in a manner forementioned) importing no otherwise than when it was spoken of Jacob and others, that our Saviour did really pass into the state of death; we shall be sure therein not to err; the proposition being most certainly true, so understood: we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first and best (if not the only) reason of this proposition being commended to our belief: for that place of scripture, or rather one place, being the same application of a place in the Psalms (which seems to have been the occasion, and is the main ground of its assertion), doth not refuse, but rather most commodiously admits this interpretation: for our Saviour's *soul not being left in hell, and not seeing corruption*, is plainly by St. Peter himself interpreted of his *resurrection;* he (David) *foreseeing this, spake of Christ's resurrection*, Acts ii. 31: and in the like manner by St. Paul, *As concerning that he raised him from the dead, now no more to see corruption, he said on this wise* (Acts xiii. 34:) that speech, I say, *Our Saviour's soul not being left in hell, and not seeing corruption*, is by the apostles interpreted by our Saviour's resurrection (that is, by his being freed from the bands of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh had seen corruption;) and is opposed by them to David's continuing in death and seeing corruption (his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave;) the apostles not designing to assert or prove more than our Saviour's resurrection: David, argue

[e] Gen. v. 24; ἐν τοῖς ἄνω τόποις, Arist. de Cœlo; 2 Kings ii. 11.

[f] Ecclus. xxi. 11; Wisd. xvii. 14.

[g] Isa. xxxviii. 18.

[h] Psal. vi. 5; Eccles. ix. 10; *vide* Ecclus. xvii. 27.

[i] Luke xvi. 23.

they, fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that state; David remained unto this day in the grave, and so his body being reduced to dust saw corruption; ἐτελεύτησε, καὶ ἐτάφη (saith St. Peter), *he died and was buried*,[j] without reversion: therefore that speech of his in the Psalm must not fully and ultimately be understood of him (to whom they did not so exactly agree;) but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep; whose flesh, by being opportunely raised up, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, *Thou shalt not leave* τὴν ψυχήν μου, *my soul* (or my life), nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition; for (to omit that bolder exposition of Beza, who by the *soul* understood the *cadaver*, or *dead body*, sometime translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro*) nothing is more usual in the Hebrew than both for the flesh and for the soul, each of them synecdochically, to signify *the person* (considered as sometime endued with life), and in propriety of speech to stand for the body or for the soul: *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death*, and, *That soul shall be cut off*, are terms equivalent in the law: *The soul that eateth*, *The soul that toucheth*, and the like phrases, often occur: in fine, *To deliver their soul from death*, as the Psalmist speaks—*God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; What man is he that shall not see death? that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?*—do seem expressions parallel to this, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell*; which yet seem to impart no more than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death. It is also observable, that St. Paul, in the 13th of the Acts, neglecting the former part, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell*, contents himself with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy one to see corruption*; intimating both parts to signify the same thing. If it be objected as an inconvenience to this explication of the words here in the Creed, that, admitting it, they signify no more than what was before expressed in plain words, *dead and buried*; and so contain only a needless repetition; I answer, 1. That this objection concerns them who inserted the words here, who yet (even supposing the truth of this exposition) might be excusable, as suspecting it possible that our Saviour's being ἐν ᾅδῃ, according to St. Peter, might imply more than this, although they knew not what distinctly; who might also perhaps intend somewhat by these words different from this sense, but not so truly applicable to them, or agreeable to the truth of the thing: I answer, 2. That a greater inconvenience seems to arise from expounding them otherwise; it reflecting upon the more ancient compilers both of this and most other Creeds, who left them out, which they should not have done, if they contain any thing considerable and different from what is here otherwise expressed; whose credit is more, I conceive, to be tendered, than that of their juniors and followers: and so much the more, for that defect and omission in matters of this kind is less tolerable than any redundance in expression. Which inconvenience may seem in a manner to reach higher, even to St. Paul himself, who (in the place forecited) declaring the sum of what he both learned and taught concerning our Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions his death, burial, and resurrection: *I delivered unto you first, that Christ died according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day*;[l] which enumeration of his, it seems, we may well acquiesce in, as sufficient and complete; and may thence with great probability infer, that no other *descent* of our Saviour *into hell* (beside his death and burial) was by him understood or delivered in his catechetical discourses and preachings as a point of faith: so that what is objected as an inconvenience, proves no small advantage to this exposition. But, I say, further,

2. To the main question, that, interpreting *hell* for the mansion, or habitation of souls (to omit that *sheol*, as I before noted, seems to signify otherwise in the Old Testament, and thence consequently the places in the Acts applied

[j] Acts ii. 29.

[k] Exod. xxxi. 14; Lev. vii. 25, 27; v. 2, &c.; Psal. xxxiii. 19; xlix. 15; lxxxix. 48.

[l] 1 Cor. xv. 4.

out of the Psalms not so proper to this purpose; whereby the main ground and support of the assertion itself, taken according to this sense, is removed; waving, I say, that consideration, and taking ᾅδης according to the meaning which we must confess it sometime to bear in the New Testament, yet) there seems to follow some inconvenience thereupon: for then we must either take it for the place of damned spirits shut up in torment and despair (according to which acception the proposition itself would be most certainly uncertain, as having no good ground for it; and most probably false, for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into paradise), or we must take it for a place common to all souls, as well good and blessed, as bad and miserable; (for that it comprehends the place of torment, in the New Testament sense, is evident by the parable of Dives forecited.) But I think St. Augustin had reason to doubt, whether it were consonant to the style of the New Testament, that *hades* there should be ever taken in a good or middle sense, at least; whereas it is said in the Revelation, that those two inseparable companions, *death* and *hades* (that *hades*, which is there said to render up its dead to judgment), *were cast into the lake of fire*, it is hard to suppose *paradise* was cast in there;[m] yea, hard to say *hades* was cast in there, supposing that word did then in its usual latitude of signification (as Christians understood it) comprehend *paradise*. Yea, further, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose paradise to be seated in a place beneath us (or within the earth;) that paradise, which is either the same with the *third heavens*, in St. Paul, or confining thereto;[n] it is hard, I say, to be forced by an interpretation of these words to consent that paradise (that *locus divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatus; the place of divine* comfort and *amenity destinated to receive the spirits of the saints*) should have its place in the darksome bowels of the earth; no commodious situation, it seems, for delightsome walks and bowers: yet so must it be seated, that our Saviour's soul may be (at least in rigour and propriety of speech) said to descend thereinto. The word *descend*, taking *hell* for the ancient *sheol* forementioned, is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentic use and the nature of the thing; but taking *hell* in this sense (for the place of souls) is most probably improper, and hath no certain ground or authority to commend it; for it is said, that our Saviour's soul was in hell, not that it descended thither; nor can it by consequence be inferred so to have done, according to this meaning of *hell*. However, yet I add,

3. Seeing it is a most certain truth that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the place appointed to receive happy souls after their recession from the body, and resignation into God's hands; if we take *hell* in a general and common sense for the place or state of souls departed; and *descending*, only for passing thereinto (by a falling, as it were, from life, or together with the descent of the body; and thence styled *descending;* what appears visibly happening to the body being attributed to the soul;) if, I say, we thus interpret our Saviour's *descent into hell*, for his soul's going into the common receptacle and mansion of souls, we shall be sure not substantially to mistake. And this sense, I must confess, if the words can handsomely bear it, would be very proper to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct from what is otherwise expressed, and serving to the further confirmation of those great articles adjoining, our Saviour's *death* and *resurrection*:* it implying the perfect and utmost accomplishment of death, for the soul to have deserted the body, and to have been translated into those invisible regions, so distant hence,[o] and whence—*revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras*, is a labour indeed, and a work not to be effected but by the most miraculous power of him whose privilege it is *to kill, and make alive; to bring down to hell, and bring up; to lead unto the gates of hell, and bring back again.*[p]

This is all that I shall say about this point; for I will not be at the trouble

[m] Rev. xx. 14. [n] 2 Cor. xii.

* Ἀδύνατος ἅδης. [o] Wisd. xvii. 14.

[p] 1 Sam. ii. 6; Deut. xxxii. 39; Wisd. xvi. 13; Tobit. xiii. 2.

to consider or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why and to what effect our Saviour descended into hell; that he went thither to preach unto, convert, and redeem all or some of the damned souls from thence (for some say, that he emptied, and quite depopulated, that region of darkness; others are not so liberal as to free all thence, but some only, the fitter objects of compassion and favour; both saying that which hath very weak or no reasons to maintain it, very strong and plain objections to assail it;) that he went to free and usher into glory the souls of the patriarchs, and other good people, from that infernal *limbus*, in which they suppose them to have been till then detained (a place by no likely means to be proved existent otherwhere than in the fancy of the inventors thereof;) that he went to affront, triumph over, and terrify the powers of darkness upon their own ground, in their own dominions. These and the like conceits seem sufficiently discountenanced and confuted by saying, the scripture nowhere plainly declares any such thing, and consequently that they have no good ground to insist on (they pretend only one or two difficult and obscure places, which may be many ways otherwise expounded, so as not so much as to favour them:) whereas in teaching us, that our Saviour preached upon earth salvation to them which in this life should be converted to believe upon him and obey his laws; damnation irrecoverable to them which should persist in infidelity and disobedience; that he merited by his obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a redemption from future distress, and a translation into bliss and glory; that he vanquished and triumphed over the powers of hell upon the cross; in these things the scripture is clear and copious: but concerning that pretended preaching unto, conversion, and deliverance of souls beneath; or that translation of souls out of any subterraneous closets, or prisons,[s] (so they do not scruple to call them), or that local triumph in the devil's kingdom, it is quite silent, or very dark in expression; and therefore we may be somewhat backward in assenting to such conceits; which, whoever first devised, we may suspect they did ἐμβατεύειν ἃ μὴ ἑωράκεσαν, invade things unseen by themselves, and in very deed invisible to any.[r] But let it suffice to have discoursed thus much about this endless question.

[s] Bellarm.

[r] Col. ii. 18

The third Day he rose again from the Dead.

This article is one of the principal articles, in its nature, its design, its consequence; the faith of which was intended as a means to produce faith in the rest; removing the doubts and difficulties that might obstruct it; for by our Saviour's resurrection the truth of all his pretences concerning his person, his office, his doctrine, were to the highest degree of satisfaction and conviction assured; no miracle could be greater in itself (more signifying the power of God therein employed;) none more proper for production and confirmation of the faith required of us concerning the dignity of his person, the efficacy of his performances, the validity of his promises, the reality of his doctrine in relation to the future state. God (as St. Paul tells us, Acts xvii. 31), did πίστιν παρέχειν πᾶσιν, afford to all a most persuasive and convincing argument of all truth concerning our Saviour, raising him from the dead.

1. If the meanness of his birth and parentage; the low garb and small lustre of his life; the bitter sorrows and shameful disgraces of his death, though accompanied with such excellent qualities, and such wonderful performances, as did appear in and were done by him, might (especially in those that stand at distance) breed any suspicion (as indeed they have afforded matter of argument to the adversaries of Christianity against it) concerning our Saviour, whether he were indeed (as he pretended) the Son of God (so near in nature, in favour, in affection to God), designed by him to be the Saviour of mankind, the Lord of all things, the Judge of the world; if, I say, such homely circumstances that attended his person, such sad accidents that befell him, may in the eyes of those who cast only superficial glances on the thing, and look not beyond outward appearances, beget doubtful apprehensions concerning

our Saviour's person, or somewhat depress him in their conceit;[s] the wonderful power and special favour of God toward him demonstrated in his resurrection, will discuss those mists, and raise him in their esteem: *For though* (as St. Paul speaks) *he was crucified out of weakness* (that is, therein the infirmity of our nature being discovered), *yet he liveth by the power of God;*[t] by his recovering life, his divine power is declared; it was an ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δύναμεως, an excessive greatness of power, which God exerted;[u] an ἐνέργεια τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος, an activity of the might of strength, or of most mighty strength, which he set on work in the raising of Christ from the dead (so the apostle labours to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle.) [Pliny, I remember, among instances of things which were impossible even to God himself, reckons these two;[v] *Mortales æternitate donare, et revocare defunctos* (to bestow eternity upon mortals, and to recall the dead to life;) both which suppositions we see by our Saviour's resurrection clearly confuted, yet so as the making them argues how high and hard a work in human conceit it was to effect it.] Indeed, St. Paul seems to suppose otherwise, when he thus puts the question: *What? doth it seem incredible to you that God should raise the dead?*[w] But there is an emphasis in the words παρ' ὑμῖν *with you;* with you, whose minds were prepossessed with notions favourable to this doctrine; who had so many instances thereof; who had been instructed to hope future rewards from God. And as it was an instance of God's mighty power, so was it no less a mark of his special favour toward our Saviour: as to take away life signifies extremity of displeasure, so to restore it implies the highest degree of favour. Death in itself imports a total incapacity and deprivation of good, and is used to express the worst state of being, or utmost misery, consequent upon man's disobedience and God's displeasure: and life, as it is really in its own nature the foundation of perceiving good, so it represents and expresses all the happiness of which we are capable, all the reward promised to obedience: wherefore God raising our Saviour to life, declared thereby his especial love and favour to him, his full approbation and acceptance of him: if yielding him to death might seem to argue God's displeasure toward, or disregard of him; raising him to life doth much more demonstrate a tender affection, an extraordinary care for and respect to him: that might be supposed to proceed upon other grounds; this can receive no other interpretation. To give life is the ground of that relation which is the highest in nature, and speaks most affection; wherefore, in scripture language, *to raise up*, is termed *to beget;*[x] and this regeneration is put for the resurrection; and our Saviour, in the mystical speech of the Psalmist, expounded by St. Paul, is said that day to be begot, when he was raised by God; so that it being a paternal act doth signify a paternal regard: whence St. Paul further saith, *Our Saviour was declared* (or rather determined and defined) *to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead:*[y] this act of God raising him, not only showing him to be, but in some sort constituting him, the Son of God.

2. Thus doth our Saviour's resurrection aptly serve to dignify and exalt his person in our esteem: it also may confirm our faith in the efficacy of his performances for us: we need not doubt, considering this, of the pardon of our sins, the acceptance of our persons, the sanctification of our hearts, the salvation of our souls (we, which is always to be supposed and understood, performing the conditions required of us;) I say, the pardon of our sins, and acceptance of our persons; for, *as he was delivered for our offences, so he was raised again for our justification;*[z] that is, we are thereby assured of our acquittance from sin, and restitution to God's favour; and perhaps somewhat more; our pardon and acceptance seems not only declared, but also consigned and delivered up unto us by our Saviour's resurrection: as we were punished in his suffering, so in his resurrection we were restored; Christ merited our justification by his passion, but God gave it us in his resurrection; being that

[s] *Vide* Rom. i. 4.
[t] 2 Cor. xiii. 4.
[u] Eph. i. 19.
[v] Lib. ii. cap. 7.
[w] Acts xxvi. 8.
[x] Acts xiii. 33.
[y] Rom. i. 3, 4.
[z] Rom. iv. 25.

formal act of grace whereby he was (after having undergone the effects of divine displeasure) apparently reinstated in God's favour, and we virtually in him: *Who then shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again:*[a] since God hath acknowledged satisfaction done to his justice, by discharging our surety from prison, and all further prosecution; since he hath in a manner so notorious and signal demonstrated his favour to our proxy, there can be no further pretence against us, no fear of any displeasure remaining: in our baptism was represented, as the burial of Christ (we being there in show and mystery buried with him), so his resurrection also, in virtue of which we then received the benefits corresponding to that representation: *Being buried with Christ in baptism* (saith St. Paul) *in him also we were raised again—and us, being dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of our flesh, he quickened together with him, forgiving us all our sins:*[b] and συνεζωοποιησε, συνήγειρε, συνεκάθισε, he co-quickened co-raised, and co-seated us (if I may so speak) with him in heavenly places.[c]

3. We may also with good reason hope for aid sufficient to sanctify our hearts and lives: that he which raised our Saviour from a natural death, both can and will raise us from spiritual death, from that mortal slumber in sins and tresspasses in which we lie buried naturally, to walk in that newness of life, and heavenly conversation, to which the gospel calls us, and the divine Spirit excites us:[d] *which is that first resurrection, which blessed and holy is he that hath a part in; on such the second death shall have no power:*[e] for also, consequently, our Saviour's resurrection assures to us the salvation of our souls; for by it, as St. Peter tells us, *God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath regenerated us unto a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved for us in the heavens:*[f] and, *If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*[g] Thus may our Saviour's resurrection confirm our faith concerning the efficacy of his performances for us.

4. It was also a most strong and proper argument to demonstrate the validity of his promises, and the truth of his doctrine concerning the future state (a matter most important, and a fundamental ingredient of all religion;) an argument most strong, I say, as demonstrating by palpable instance the possibility of what he promised and taught, exemplifying in himself, what he bade others to expect, that by divine power they should be raised to life: by his doctrine *he brought life and immortality to light* (a point so much doubted and disputed of before; so little seen in the darkness of natural reason, so clouded in the uncertainties of common tradition;) but by his resurrection he proved that light to be true and certain: *He thereby* (as St. Paul expresses it, Acts xxvi. 23), *by the resurrection from the dead, did most effectually,* φῶς καταγγέλλειν, *denounce and declare light to the people, and to the nations* (to all men, both Jews and Gentiles.) Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory are all the arguments which the subtlest speculation could ever produce, to assert the distinction from the body, the separate existence, the continuance of man's soul after death; the providence and justice of God over men here; the dispensations of reward and punishments hereafter (those great incentives to virtue, and discouragements from vice), in comparison of this one sensible experience, attesting to and confirming that doctrine which contains those great things: and for the same reason a most proper argument:[h] for though any miracle (plainly and convincingly so) may suffice to confirm any point of doctrine; yet a miracle in the same kind, about the same matter, is more immediately pertinent and efficacious to that purpose. By curing the sick, our Saviour proved that he could remit sins; and that he was Lord of the Sabbath; having authority to dispense with the rigorous observation of positive laws; and in like manner all the mira-

[a] Rom. viii. 33, 34.
[b] Col. ii. 12, 13.
[c] Eph. ii. 5, 6.
[d] Rom. vi. 4; Eph. ii. 2, &c.; Col. ii. 13, 14.
[e] Rev. xx. 6.
[f] 1 Pet. i. 3.
[g] Rom. v. 10.
[h] *Vide* 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

cles he did were in their nature apt to prove the truth of whatever he taught: *These were writ* (saith St. John) *that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;*[i] yet so as to beget persuasion by discourse interceding, and by virtue of a parity in reason: but our Saviour's resurrection did prove the possibility of ours (with all that coheres or is consequent thereto) directly and immediately, with all evidence possible to sense itself: we cannot (considering this) have any pretence to doubt of what he and his apostles have taught us; that he preceeding as *the first-born from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that sleep*, as the captain of life, as our forerunner and pattern, we ἐν ἰδίῳ τάγματι, in our due rank and season, as younger sons of the resurrection, as serving under his command and conduct, in resemblance and imitation of him, shall follow:[j] so that, *if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead doth dwell in us, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us: that if we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also* (planted) *in the likeness of his resurrection: that as in Adam we died, so in Christ we shall revive; as we have borne the image of the earthly man, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: that he who raised our Lord shall raise us by his power: knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus shall also raise us by Jesus.*[k] Thus is the resurrection of our Saviour able and apt to beget and establish our faith concerning his person, his performances, and his doctrince; and it being in such manner conducible to so high purposes, it was requisite itself should be declared with most clear and full evidence; and that it should be so, God did abundantly provide. I omit the types and mystical representations which did foreshadow it; and the prophetical passages expressing or alluding to it; having incidentally, upon other occasions, bordering on this point, formerly touched upon the principal of them;) and only say, that no matter of fact is capable of surer attestation, than God did order this to have. He did προχειροτονεῖν (predesigned, with an especial care pick out and appoint) witnesses for this purpose;[l] persons in all respects, for their number, for their qualifications, for their circumstances, most considerable and credible: not one or two, but very many (*five hundred*, St. Paul tells us, *saw him at once;*[m]) not strangers, but persons most familiarly acquanted with him (*who were with him from the beginning, who went out and in with him*, for three years' space, *from his baptism to his ascension;*[n]) not upon relation, or at a distance, but by immedtate sense and converse with him (*who did*, as St. Peter, one of them, tells us, *eat and drink with him after that he rose from the dead;*[o]) not from a single, transient experience, but by frequent conversation for a good continuance of time; ἐπὶ πλείους ἡμέρας, *for many days together;* (*To whom*, saith St. Luke, *he presented himself living after he had suffered by many certain tokens, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God;*[p]) persons of unquestionable discretion and honesty, who preached sincerity to others (with effectual persuasion), and in other things irreprovably practised it; who could have no imaginable design in testifying it, beside the discharge of their conscience in God's sight; as encountering thereby the most terrible oppositions and difficulties; incurring most certain and most grievous dangers, troubles, and sufferings; without any possible benefit (of worldly profit, honour, or pleasure) accruing thence to themselves; without any comfort or support, except the reward they might hope for from God for the performance of so difficult and troublesome a duty: in fine, by persons whose testimony God himself ratified by extraordinary graces (invincible courage, constancy, patience, self-denial, meekness, and charity) conferred on them; by miraculous works openly and frequently performed by them; so that they

[i] John xx. 31.

[j] Rev. i. 5; Col. i. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23; Acts iii. 15; v. 31; Heb. vi. 20; Luke xx. 36; Rom. viii. 11.

[k] Rom. vi. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 22, 49; 1 Cor. vi. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 14; *vide* 1 Thess. iv. 14.

[l] *Vide* Acts xvii. 3; Luke xxiv. 46; Acts x. 41.

[m] 1 Cor. xv. 6.

[n] John xv. 27.; Acts i. 21, 22.

[o] Acts x. 41.

[p] Acts xiii. 31; i. 3.

did effectually *with great power yield their testimony concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them* (great appearance of the divine favour toward them, of divine goodness in them), as we have it, Acts iv. 33. It was the principal part of their office (of the highest apostolical office) to testify this truth; as we see in the choice of Matthias, where it is said, *Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*[q] And beyond the providing witnesses so qualified, testimonies so credible, what could God himself do necessary to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity, or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition (unreasonably and unworthily incredulous;) what means, I say, could further be required, to beget and confirm our faith in the matter of our Saviour's resurrection, and consequently of all doctrines taught by him and his disciples which by this most signal miracle are so perfectly asserted and proved?

Now the great end and use of our Saviour's resurrection being thus declared, I shall not insist upon explaining the nature thereof (it being clear that his death consisting in the separation of soul and body, each departing to its place, his resurrection, opposed thereto and restoring him into the same state, must consist in resuscitating, reducing, and reuniting them together, so as to recover all vital faculties, and exercise vital operations), nor in considering the causes efficient thereof (which it is certain could be no other than that divinity common to three Persons individed in nature, power, and operation;) whence it is attributed, as most commonly to God, so peculiarly sometimes to the glory and power of the Father, who in order of nature and in all common operations doth precede;[r] sometimes to the Son, *who laid down his life, and took it up again;*[s] who demolished the temple of his own body, and reared it up again; sometimes to the Holy Ghost, by which, as he did cast out devils, and performed other his great works, so he did this grand miracle:[t] which dwelling in him, did quicken his mortal body, as is intimated and by consequence arises from the place forecited Rom. viii. 11. Upon these things, as also upon the manner and circumstances of our Saviour's resurrection, I shall not insist, having not leisure sufficient to consider and prosecute all, but only to touch those things which seem most material and useful.

Yet must I not altogether pass over the circumstance of time (because mentioned here), *Upon the third day.*[u] This is added, as it is commonly in scripture when mention is made of our Saviour's resurrection, according to the common manner of speech, in which, when we relate any story or matter of fact, we are wont to adjoin the circumstances (of time most commonly, many times of place, and sometimes of other respects and adjuncts), as signs and arguments of the things certainly, and our assurance in affirming it. Fictions usually go naked of circumstances, nor can the relators of them tell when or where or how the matter of them did exist; but when we are punctual in circumstance, it signifies we are serious and confident, and grounded in the thing itself. As for this circumstance itself, that which is most remarkable therein seems to be the wisdom of God choosing a convenient distance of time, after our Saviour's death, for his resurrection; he stayed so long, that it might be thoroughly certain our Saviour was really dead, beyond all possibility of recovery by natural means; (all natural heat being necessarily extinguished by that durance in the grave, although he had been taken down with some undiscernible remainders thereof from the cross;) he deferred it no longer, both because there was no reason for doing so, and because it was fit, that while men's memories were fresh, their passions warm, their fancies busy, their mouths open in discourse concerning his death; while the designed witnesses were present (both enemies watching and friends attending the event), it was, I say, then most fitting that our Saviour should arise: as for the meaning of the word *third* (whether it be to be taken inclusive-

[q] Acts i. 21, 22.
[r] Rom. vi. 4.
[s] John x. 17, 18; ii. 19.
[t] Rom. i. 4; viii. 11; Matt. xii. 28.
[u] Acts x. 40; 1 Cor. xv. 4.

ly in respect to the day of our Saviour's passion, or so to exclude it), with the reconciling of some scriptures seeming dissonant in the point, I refer you for satisfaction to commentators upon the gospel; the question not belonging to the substance of our faith, nor having any very considerable influence (that I see) upon practice. I proceed therefore.

He ascended into Heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.

After our Lord had (after his resurrection) consummated what was requisite to be done by him upon earth for the confirmation of our faith, and constitution of his church; having a competent time conversed with his disciples (establishing their faith, enlightening their minds in the knowledge of truth and understanding of the scriptures,[v] inflaming their affections, comforting their hearts against ensuing tribulations, all oppositions of earth, and hell, for his sake; directing and prescribing to them how they should proceed in their instructing, converting, and reconciling the world to the faith and obedience of his law; furnishing them with commission and authority to testify his truth, to dispense the tenders of grace and pardon procured by him, to collect and build up that church which he had purchased by his blood, lastly imparting his effectual benediction to them; having, I say, done these things (which St. Luke expresses altogether by the words ἐντειλάμενος αὐτοῖς, that is, having given all necessary instructions, and laid fitting commands upon them,[w]) he was in their presence taken, carried up (ἀνελήφθη, ἀνεφέρετο), and ascended into heaven;[x] he, that is, he according to his humanity, his body and soul, were by the divine power translated into heaven: into heaven; what is meant by that (in the utmost extent, according to the truth of the thing[y]) appears by other phrases equivalent, by which this action is expressed: *Ascending to the Father;* that is, to the place of God's more especial presence and residence; where ἐμφανίζεται τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ, he appears to the face of God: *being exalted to the right hand of God* (that is, to the place of highest eminency, and of greatest proximity to God;) entering εἰς τὰ ἅγια (into those most holy places, that ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος, those intimate recesses of inaccessible and incommunicable glory;[z]) being assumed and entering into glory; passing through the heavens (that is, all places above, inferior to the highest pitch of glory;) ascending ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, above, beyond all heavens; becoming ὑψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν (more sublime than, advanced above, the heavens;[a]) by which appears, that the utmost term of our Saviour's ascent was that place of all in situation most high, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most august; the inmost sanctuary of God's temple above, not made with hands; the most special presence-chamber in those heavenly courts. Thither did our Saviour ascend; and there (as it follows here) *he sitteth at God's right hand*, for the ends and uses of these two (one whereof is only the way or tendency unto the other), conspiring or being coincident (I shall join the consideration of them together;) the meaning of which words it is not hard to find out, it being obvious that the state of things above is in scripture represented to us by that similitude which is apt most to beget in us reverence towards God (and which really doth most resemble it;) the state of a king here, sitting upon his throne; personages of highest rank and respect, his nearest relations, his most beloved favourites, the chief ministers and officers of his crown attending upon him, and surrounding his throne; so yet that for distinction, some place (more eminent and honourable than the rest) is assigned to him, toward whom the King intends to declare especial regard and favour; which place (by custom grounded upon reasons plain enough, the opportunity of nearness for all kind of conversation and address; and the right hand's advantage for strength and activity, acquired by use, and consequent-

[v] *Vide* Luke and John ult.

[w] Acts i. 2.

[x] Luke xxiv. 51.

[y] πορευθεὶς εἰς οὐρανόν, 1 Pet. iii. 22.

[z] John xiii. 1; xx. 17; Phil. ii. 9; Eph. i. 20; Heb. ix. 24; Acts ii. 33; v. 31; vi. 19; Heb. ix. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Luke xxiv. 26; Heb. iv. 14.

[a] Eph. iv. 10; Heb. vii. 28.

ly also its aptitude to give or take) hath been determined to be the *next* place at the right hand; (as we see, for instance, when Bathsheba came to Solomon, it is said, *The king—sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand:*[b]) thus our Saviour being raised by God to the supreme pitch of honour, of power, of favour with him, having *advanced him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins;* having *superexalted him, and bestowed on him a name above all names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, under the earth, must bow;* having *seated him in heavenly places, above all principality, and authority, and power, and dominion, and name* (or *title*) *that is named, both in the present world and that which is to come;* having *committed to him all authority in heaven and upon the earth; given all things into his hands;* having *made him heir of all things; subjected all things under his feet* (*angels, authorities, and powers*), *crowned him with* (sovereign) *glory and honour:*[c] having *given him* (what that innumerable host of heaven in the Revelation acknowledges him worthy of, v. 12), *power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing* (that is, all good and excellence possible in the highest degree;) God having, I say, conferred these pre-eminences of dignity, power, and favour upon our Saviour, he is said therefore to have *seated him at his right hand; at the right hand of the power* (as it is in the Gospels; that is, of the Sovereign and Almighty Potentate;) *at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and at the right hand of the throne of God* (as it is in the Apostle to the Hebrews.[d]) So much plainly the whole speech imports; and if there be any peculiar emphasis designed in the word *sitting*, beyond that which is sometimes more simply and generally said, being at God's right hand, here may be further implied, the firm possession, the durable continuance, the undisturbed rest and quiet of this glorious and happy condition wherein he is instated;[e] as also, it doth augment the main sense, *sitting* being the most honourable posture; and therefore signifying to the utmost that eminency of favour and respect he hath in God's sight; as also, it may denote further the nature and quality of his preferment; his being constituted to rule and to judge; and therefore expressed as sitting upon a throne of majesty, upon a tribunal of justice.

So much briefly may serve for the explication of these two points: (for as to the words subjoined, *the Father Almighty*, whereof the latter is addititious, and not extant in the more ancient forms of this Creed, having considered them before, treating upon the beginning of the Creed, and particularly having there taken the word *Almighty* in its greatest latitude, so as to include both παντοκράτωρ and παντοδύναμος, passing over the critical distinction made between them; I shall not repeat any thing concerning them.)

Now as to the ends of our Saviour's glorious ascension and abode in heaven, the effects produced thereby, the uses which the belief and consideration thereof may conduce to; the ends and effects thereof, I say, declared in scripture, are briefly,

1st, That as a Priest and Advocate he might there intercede for us, for the pardon of our sins, for the acceptance of our persons, for the success of our prayers, for the supply of our needs, for the collation of all benefits and blessings on us; representing his merits, pleading our cause, presenting our supplications, and interposing his favour and authority in our behalf: *He ever liveth to make intercession for us: He is our High Priest, sitting at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens*, there performing that office for us: *Who shall condemn? It is Christ who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedeth for us* (there:) *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: God exalted him as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.*[f] It is by him that we

[b] 1 Kings ii. 19.

[c] Acts v. 31; Phil. ii. 9, 10; Eph. i. 20, 21; Matt. xxviii. 18; John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2; Heb. i. 2; ii. 8, 9; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

[d] καθίζειν, Eph. i. 20; Matt. xxvi. 64; Mark xiv. 62; Luke xxii. 69; Heb. viii. 1; xii. 2.

[e] Rom. viii. 34; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

[f] Heb. vii. 24; viii. 1; Rom. viii. 34; 1 John ii. 2; Acts v. 31.

do προσερχεσθαι τῷ Θεῷ, have our access to God, not only by virtue of his merits, but by his continual act of mediation: it is he, that is the golden censer, at the golden altar before God, offers up the incense of our prayers, consecrated and perfumed by his hand.[g]

2dly, He ascended and resides in heaven, that as a King he might govern us, protect us, save and deliver us from our enemies; that he might subdue and destroy his and our enemies; the enemies of his kingdom and of our salvation; the world, the flesh, the devil, sin, death, and hell; whatever opposes his glory, his truth, his service, and consequently impedes our salvation, either by open violence or fraudulent practice. God did say unto him, *Sit thou at my right hand, till I have made thine enemies thy footstool;* and accordingly, *He must reign until he hath put all his enemies under his feet:*[h] no power shall be able to withstand his will and command, who sits at the helm of omnipotent Sovereignty, at that right hand which governs and orders all things. But having before spoken concerning the royal office and lordship of our Saviour, I shall add no more to this purpose.

3dly, Our Saviour tells us himself, *that he went to heaven to prepare a place for us; to prepare mansions of joy and bliss in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore.*[i] He is our πρόδρομος, our forerunner into heaven, that hath disposed things there for our entertainment and reception:[j] *It is his will, that where he is, there we should be also; that we might contemplate and partake of his glory.*[k]

4thly, Our Saviour also tells us, that it was necessary he should depart hence, that he might send the divine Spirit, the power from on high, to enlighten, sanctify, and comfort us: *If I go not away* (saith he) *the Paraclete will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you:*[l] that is, God in his wisdom hath appointed (for the exaltation of our Saviour's honour), that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the reward of his obedience; the consequence of his triumph; the fruit of his intercession; an ornament of his royal estate; a pledge of his princely munificence: it was reserved as a most royal gift, fit to be given at his coronation; his being inaugurated and invested in sovereign dignity, power, and glory: whence it is said, *The Holy Spirit was not yet,*[m] (understand, was not yet poured forth and bestowed in that manner and measure, as God did intend to do it hereafter), *because Jesus was not yet glorified;* it was from Jesus, received into glory, that excellent gift was designed to come, in God's purpose and promise. Add hereto consequently,

5thly, That all good gifts and graces bestowed on the church in general, and upon every member thereof singly, useful *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of Christ's body,* do proceed hence: *To every one of you* (saith St. Paul) *is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ:*[n] whence he saith (the Psalmist saith, prophesying of our Saviour), *Having ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*[o]

6thly, I might add, that God thus advanced our Saviour to so high a dignity, to declare the love he bears to piety, righteousness, and obedience, in so highly rewarding and dignifying it: *For because he was obedient to the death, therefore did God exalt him: For the suffering of death, do we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.*[p] The belief, therefore, and consideration of these truths, will serve (briefly) to nourish and increase our faith, to cherish and strengthen our hope, to excite and inflame our devotion, to direct and elevate our affections, to enforce and engage, to encourage and quicken, our obedience.

To nourish, I say, and cherish our faith and hope. If the resurrection of our Saviour did beget in us a strong persuasion concerning the truth of, and a lively hope of the good proceeding from, our Saviour's undertaking and doctrine;[q] his

[g] Heb. vii. 25; Rev. viii. 3.
[h] Psal. cx. 1; Acts ii. 34; Heb. i. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 25.
[i] John xiv. 2; Psal. xvi. 11.
[j] Heb. vi. 20. [k] John xvii. 24.
[l] John xvi. 7; Luke xxiv. 49.
[m] John v. ii. 39.
[n] Ephes. iv. 12, 7, 8, &c. [o] Psal. lxviii. 19.
[p] Phil. ii. 9; Heb. ii. 9. [q] 1 Pet. i. 3.

ascension, declared by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities, must needs nourish, augment, and corroborate them. We cannot distrust any promises made by him; we cannot despair of any good from him (not of relief, succour, supply in our straits, or in our needs; of comfort in our afflictions; of protection in our dangers; of deliverance from our miseries;) from him who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the divine Power; having all things committed to his authority and disposal. It also serves to excite and inflame our devotions: for having such a Mediator in heaven, so near in God's presence, so much in his favour; such a master of requests; so good a friend at court; such a favourite at hand, to present up, to commend, to further our petitions: *We may* (as the apostle to the Hebrews enjoins us) *come to the throne of grace with all freedom of speech and boldness, that we may receive mercy, and find grace for seasonable aid:*[r] we need not doubt of that promise being fulfilled, *Whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive:*[s] and what greater incitement can there be to devotion, than the assurance of so good acceptance, of so happy success thereof?[t] The proper influence, also, of these considerations, is to direct and elevate our affections from these inferior, mean, vain, and base things, to the things above: *Seek the things above* (saith St. Paul), *where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God:*[u] where Christ our life, our hope, our treasure, our head is, there should our hearts be, thither should our affections tend; there should our πολίτευμα (our business and conversation) be, where the family is to which we relate, and its Master;[v] where the city is, where our final rest and abode should be (*for we are but strangers and pilgrims, and sojourners*), with its Lord and Governor;[w] where our country is, the place of all our estate and concernment, and he resides which only can make it good to us. It, lastly, doth engage and encourage us to all kind of obedience, to consider that high reward of eternal glory and happiness which our Saviour hath obtained as a reward of his obedience, and as a pledge of like reward designed to us, if we insist in his footsteps: *Let us run the race that is set before us* (saith the apostle to the Hebrews), *looking to the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus; who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set at the right hand of God:*[x] *I covenant to you* (saith our Saviour) *a kingdom, as my Father covenanted me a kingdom;*[y] supposing we obey his commandments, we shall obtain a like excellent and happy estate: as we see God hath performed to him, so will also he make good his word to us: *The word* (saith St. Paul) *is faithful, and assuredly true: if we have died with him* (to lust and sin), *we shall also live with him* (in joy and glory;) *if we endure* (in obedience and patience), *we shall also reign with him.*[z] To which blessed kingdom God in his mercy bring us all, through the grace, merits, and intercession of him, who with God the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth for ever: to whom be all praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

[r] Heb. iv. 16.
[s] 1 John v. 14.
[t] Matt. xxi. 22.
[u] Col. iii. 1, 4; i. 27.
[v] Phil. iii. 20.
[w] Heb. xiii. 14; xi. 13.

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

This is the last of those particular characters whereby the grand object of our faith, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Saviour, is described, containing a most eminent office peculiar to him, implying the manner of executing it, and determining the extent thereof: the belief of which is of principal consequence, and in a special manner influential upon practice; whether we consider the nature of the office or the quality of the person designed thereto: the office, to judge; the Person, He; Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man (he that was born, that died, that performed and suffered so much for us), he shall judge. *Shall judge;* There is no consideration, whereof man's mind is capable, more apt to excite men to the performance of duty, to restrain them from offending, and to beget in them a care and conscience of what they do, than this,

[x] Heb. xii. 1, 2.
[y] Luke xxii. 29.
[z] 2 Tim. ii. 11; Rom. viii. 17.

that they must sometime hereafter certainly be forced to render an account of their actions; that they must undergo a most strict and severe scrutiny; and shall be dealt with according to the result thereof; so as to be approved and rewarded for their good, condemned and punished for their bad lives; a man considering and being persuaded of this, must necessarily accuse himself of extreme folly and madness, if he do not provide for that account, and order his life in respect thereto. This persuasion, I say, is the sharpest spur imaginable to the doing of good, the strongest curb from doing ill, that could be devised; and therefore all nations in some manner have acknowledged it as a fundamental principle of religion (men generally, with a ready inclination, have embraced it as so), that after this life men shall be brought to a just impartial bar, their actions scanned exactly, their persons doomed accordingly to comfort or pain.

And indeed, setting this apart, all other incentives to virtue, and all avocatives from vice (which common experience or philosophical speculation do afford us), seem very blunt and faint; do promise small effect; the native beauty and intrinsic worth of virtue, the conveniences flowing from it, the commendation that attends it, its most goodly fruits of health, peace, and tranquillity, comfort and satisfaction of mind (beside that they are usually balanced with contrary inconveniences, difficulties, crosses, troubles, and pains;) if they do not extend beyond this transitory life, how can they in reason be very considerable and efficacious to engage men to adhere thereto? how can the worst of present evils accompanying or following vice, its innate deformity and turpitude, the distempers, disturbances, and disgraces springing from or waiting on it (which also are often tempered with some kinds of pleasure, advantage, and satisfaction), if no more hereafter is to be feared, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from the pursuit thereof? the danger of death itself (the most extreme punishment which man can inflict, and which our nature doth most abhor) doth not signify much toward the diverting indigent or ambitious or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts. It is Tully's observation, and he infers from it the necessity of supposing future punishments, in order to men's restraint from such actions: *Ut aliqua* (saith he) *in vita formido improbis esset posita, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt, quod videlicet intelligebant his remotis non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam:*[a] (that in this life there might be some fear upon wicked men, those ancients would have some punishments appointed below for impious persons; because, forsooth, they understood, that these being set apart, death itself was not much to be feared.) Neither is this persuasion thus only a special instrument of virtue, but the supposal thereof is otherwise a necessary support of all religion, securing the first and main principles thereof, the being of a God and his providence: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof; of a providence over human affairs, such as might engage and encourage to religious performance, cannot subsist without supporting a future judgment: the objections that assail both, would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, if this shield did not receive and repel them. To see the most innocent and virtuous persons conflict all their days with crosses and hardships, and (as it sometimes happeneth) after all to die miserably, in great pain and ignominy; and again, to observe persons most outrageous in lewdness and injustice, to flourish and rant it out in a long undisturbed course of prosperity, ending their lives fairly and quietly;* hath caused some men to doubt whether, hath induced others flatly to disbelieve, that there is a good and a just Governor of the world; and that not without apparent cause, supposing all accounts to be made up here, no reckoning to remain to be cast up by divine goodness and justice hereafter; then would it in some sort seem true what he said, Θεῶν ὄνειδος τοὺς κακοὺς εὐδαιμονεῖν (it is a reproach to God, that bad men should be so happy;[b]) then had Diago-

* Dies deficiat, si velim numerare quibus bonis male evenerit, nec minus si commemorem, quibus improbis optime.—*Cic. de Nat. D.* iii.

[a] iv. in Catil.

[b] Cic. de Nat. D. iii.

ras argued probably from an unpunished perjury, that he which suffered himself, and others under his care, to be so abused, did not exist, or did not regard what was done; and Dionysius might have authorised his sacrilege, by his prosperous navigation; and with some show might Diogenes say, that Harpalus's successful treachery and rapine did *testimonium contra deos dicere*, yield a shrewd testimony against the being and providence of God.* But, on the contrary, supposing a judgment to follow, and a proceeding according thereto, all these discourses have no force or moment; God's present connivance (as it were), or patient indulgence toward bad men, will argue no more, than what becomes him; his excess of goodness in expecting those bad men's return to a better mind, or his wise severity in suffering them to proceed to an inexcusable degree of wickedness, to be strictly inquired into and severely punished hereafter; as neither then doth God's permitting good men to suffer deeply here infer any thing prejudicial to his goodness or justice; since thereby he makes them fitter for, and gives them a surer title to, that reward which he intends hereafter, after trial and approbation of their virtue, to confer upon them. Thus doth this doctrine clear the providence and establish the great attributes of God; therefore doth Christianity most fully and clearly teach, most earnestly and frequently inculcate this point, with all possible advantage, both for the justification of the divine attributes, and the excitation of us to a virtuous and pious life. It tells us, that all men's actions are registered in books written with greatest punctuality and exactness (the books of divine omniscience;[c]) that all persons shall be cited, and presented at the bar (*We must all φανερωθῆναι, be made to appear, παρίστασθαι, be set forth, at the judgment seat of Christ: I saw the dead, great and small, standing before God's throne;*[d]) that every thought, every word, every work of man shall be disclosed and discussed, with its due quality and desert (*God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts:*[e] *Every idle word that men shall speak, thereof they shall render account at the day of judgment: Every work shall be brought into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil;*[f]) that according to the quality of their doings, thus detected and examined, the merits of each cause weighed, every plea heard, every case considered and tried according to truth. Men shall be acquitted and commended, or declared guilty and condemned; a definite sentence passing upon every one, ἔπαινος γενήσεται ἑκάστῳ, praise (that is, generally, a due taxation and esteem, according to desert) shall be made to every one by the righteous Judge.[g] That this sentence doth include a gracious reward and a just punishment assigned respectively; everlasting glory and joy to them which have done well, endless shame and sorrow to them who have done ill; which shall be infallibly executed: (for, *God will render to every man according to his works—To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil—but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good;*[h] so St. Paul in the second to the Romans: *We must all appear before the tribunal of Christ, ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος, that every one may bear according to the things done in the body, whether good or evil.*[i]) That all this shall be performed in a most public and solemn manner, in open court, in the face of all the world, before angels and men; to the conviction and satisfaction of all;[j] so that the consciences of all concerned shall be forced to acquiesce in their doom, as most just and equal; and all shall confess, and say with them

* Improbrium igitur prosperitates, secundæ que res redarguunt (ut Diogenes dicebat) vim omnem Deorum ac potestatem

[c] Dan. vii. 10; Rev. xx. 12.

[d] Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10; Rev. xx. 12.

[e] 1 Cor. iv. 5.

[f] Matt. xii 36; Eccles. xii. 14.

[g] *Vide* 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9; 1 Cor. iv. 5.

[h] Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6-10.

[i] 2 Cor. v. 10

[j] Matt. xxiv. 34, &c.; *vide* Matt. xxv. 31; Luke xii. 9; Rom ii. 5.

in the Revelation, *Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, be to the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his ways*[k]: *Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints.*[k]

Thus (and much more fully than time will permit me to relate) doth our religion and holy scripture set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein the wonderful clemency of God shall be demonstrated; wherein his exact justice shall be declared; wherein the knotty mysteries of his providence shall be unfolded; wherein his honour (that seems now to suffer so much) shall be fully repaired and vindicated; wherein all scores, that now run on, shall be quitted and made even.[l] Such, I say, shall the judgment itself be; the consideration of which, if it make no impression upon our hearts, if it beget no dread within us, if it do not render us somewhat wary and watchful over our doings, what means can be imagined able? what method apt to do it? what a desperate hardness and insensibility do we lie under! how deplorably blind and stupid are we! more stupid than Felix, who hearing St. Paul discourse of judgment to come, could not forbear trembling:[m] more blind and senseless than those obstinate sons of darkness, the devils themselves, who *believe and trembled.*[n]

But passing the judgment, let us (which should more still engage us, and may work further on us to the same purpose) consider the Judge: *He shall come to judge;*—He: *He that came once in our nature* (with wonderful condescension of grace and charity), *to free us from sin and misery;* he that suffered so deeply for us; he that died to redeem us; he shall come to judge. The original and absolute right or power of judging appertains to God, whose creatures, whose subjects, whose servants we are naturally;[o] as he is the Sovereign Lord and King, so is he the Judge of all; as we owe obedience to the laws he hath prescribed us, performance of the service he hath allotted us, improvement of the talents he hath committed to us;[p] so we stand bound to render account to him of the due performance in those respects, and obnoxious to the judgment he shall make thereof. All judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, by virtue of authority and power derived from him: and it (for the honour of his Son, for the comfort of us) hath he delegated and committed to Jesus our Saviour; not immediately by himself, but by his Son, he hath determined to judge the world: *The Father judgeth no man* (saith our Saviour himself), *but hath committed all judgment to the Son:*[q] and, *God* (saith St. Paul) *hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained:*[r] and, saith St. Peter, *God hath commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead:*[s] and, *It is the judgment-seat of Christ, before which we must all appear.*[t] In fine, *The Father* (saith our Saviour) *hath given to the Son authority to execute judgment,* for that he is *the Son of man;*[u] (hath committed to him authority regal and judicial; for that he is that *Son of man,* whom God had designed to this office, even of old, as we see in Daniel vii. 13, 14; and in Isaiah ix. 6, 7.)

It is plain, then, that our Saviour is, by designment and deputation from God, invested with this great office and power.[v] And why God so appointed him many reasons may be assigned; upon many accounts our Saviour's person may appear most fit for this grand employment. How could God more plainly shew his goodness, in this matter, than by constituting such a Judge? Seeing that judgment should pass upon us, it was necessary and requisite; how could the terror and severity thereof be better tempered, than by putting the execution thereof into such hands? whom, were the choice permitted to us, should we rather submit

[k] Rev. xix. 1, 2; xvi. 7; xv. 3.
[l] Rom. ii. 5.
[m] Acts xxiv. 25.
[n] James ii. 19.
[o] Rom. xiv. 4.
[p] Heb. xii. 23; Gen. xviii. 25.
[q] John v. 22.
[r] Acts xvii. 31.
[s] Acts x. 42.
[t] Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10.
[u] John v. 27.
[v] John v. 23.

to, than to him who is by nature our brother; who in disposition is meek and lowly, compassionate and merciful; who by so many signal experiments hath expressed such an excess of kindness and charity toward us; who hath so conspicuously evidenced himself to be the best friend of mankind; that he ardently desires the salvation of all men, even of his worst enemies; whom he spent his blood for, whom he prayed for, dying; whom he continually invites to reconciliation and repentance? How also could God better declare his justice, than in exalting him to this pitch, who out of obedience and compliance with his will descended so low, and underwent so much? Who better deserved a crown, who more righteously would manage a sceptre, than he who willingly bore a cross, who patiently submitted to a scourge? It was also equal and fit that he who was unworthily rejected and despised, cruelly abused and persecuted, unjustly accused, condemned, and slaughtered by men, should be requited with power to right himself upon them: to reprobate them worthily who had unworthily rejected him; to judge them justly, who had wickedly condemned him; to punish them severely, who had unmercifully afflicted him; that he should see his proud and spiteful enemies lying under his feet, at his discretion.

Add hereto the wisdom of God in designing him to be judge, whom they who were to be judged might see and hear, and converse with; whom the godly with cheerful satisfaction and comfort, the wicked with befitting terror and astonishment, might behold; they with unexpressible joy hear him commending, acquitting, and blessing them; those with dismal amazement and regret hear him pronouncing the fatal sentence and curse upon them; they with humble thankfulness acknowledge his grace, those with confusion confess their guilt: *Behold* (saith St. John in the Revelation, i. 7), *he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, even they who did pierce him.* The dreadful presence of God were neither discernible nor supportable by guilty men: *Who may stand in his sight when once he is angry?*[w]

1. Who could endure to hear that *voice, at which the earth melteth;* that *reproof, at which the pillars of heaven tremble;* that majesty, in presence whereof the purest seraphims are constrained to hide their faces?[x] how should impure men abide that face which no man can behold and live? But the milder, though glorious and bright aspect of the Son of man, all men, in some manner, may be capable to see; and, if we believe St. Austin, *Rectum erat ut judicandi viderent judicem;* it was fit that they who were to be judged should see their judge.

So much reason there was (and more questionless, beyond what we can know or comprehend), that our Saviour Jesus should be designed and deputed to this office; in it we may admire the wisdom and adore the justice of God; for it we may applaud his goodness and clemency.

We may also (that this doctrine may have the greater impression upon our hearts and influence upon our practice) further consider, how great an aggravation it will seem to our whether foolish perverseness or slothful negligence; what extreme disingenuity, how wretched ingratitude, it will argue in us, to be cast and condemned by such a Judge; a Judge so just and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign and favourable to us! With what face, we having transgressed his most good and righteous laws; having violated our manifold obligations and engagements toward him; having abused his so great love and good-will toward us; having rejected his gracious tenders of mercy and favour; defeated his most serious purposes, frustrated his most earnest endeavours for our good; having so forfeited all his favour, and incurred his most grievous displeasure, shall we appear in his presence? how shall we bear the frowns of so dear love changed into fierce disdain, of highest patience turned into extreme fury, of so great majesty provoked by such affronts? With what heart shall we be able to hear that voice, which did once so sweetly and affectionately sound words of peace and comfort in our ears; that so kindly invited us to peace, so meekly entreated us to compliance, now uttering only bitter complaints and rebukes, thundering forth words of

[w] Jer. x. 10; Psal. lxxvi. 7; cxxx. 3.

[x] Psal. xlvi. 6; Job xxvi. 11; Isa. vi. 2.

indignation and terror, denouncing horrible threats and curses upon us? But let this suffice for the nature of the office and act of judging, and for the Person exercising it. Here is further implied,

2. The manner of its exercise, or execution; or rather the manner of his address and proceeding thereto (*From thence he shall come;*) the which we have in scripture (for begetting answerable veneration, regard, and awe within us) described to be with greatest solemnity, glory, and magnificence. He came once in a meek humility to teach us our duty, but he shall come again with a terrible majesty to exact an account thereof;[y] taking his progress from the highest heavens, in a most royal state, attended upon with a numerous (or rather an innumerable, πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι ἄγγελοι, *all his holy angels;* it is Matt. xxv. 31, *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and his holy angels with him;* that is, an innumerable company, as we read it Heb. xiii. 22), an innumerably numerous and pompous train of glorious angels accompanied with triumphant shouts and acclamations; a trumpet (blown by the mouth of an archangel) sounding before him an universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as shall immediately, and *in the twinkling of an eye*, shake all the earth, and rouse the dead out of their mortal slumber.[z] *This same Jesus*, said the angels to the apostles, expressing the thing in a more plain and simple manner, *which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven;*[a] (a cloud took him up from their eyes; the clouds shall restore him to sight; for, *Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him,* saith St. John:) and, *They shall see the Son of man* (himself tells us) *coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory:*[b] and, *The Lord himself* (saith St. Paul) *shall descend from heaven,* ἐν κελεύσματι (with a shout, with an exciting summons), *with the voice of an archangel, with the trump of God:*[c] *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render to every man according to his practice:*[d] *When the Son of man shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.*[e]

So the scriptures (to the purpose forementioned, to beget respect and dread in us) declare that our Saviour shall come at the end of the world, at the day of judgment, and how.

Here is further determined the extent of this judgment: he shall come to judge; whom? how many? All, without exception; expressed by the words *quick and dead:* which expression is taken from these words of St. Peter (Acts x. 42), wherein our Saviour is said to be designed by God, πρὶτὴς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν, *the judge of the living and the dead:* or of St. Paul (2 Tim. iv. 1), *I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing and his kingdom;* or those of St. Peter again (1 Pet. iv. 5), *Who shall render an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead:* and a like place (Rom. xiv. 9), *That he may be Lord both of the dead and living:* these places evidently confirm the truth of the proposition, yet so that the meaning thereof hath remained somewhat dubious, and that themselves have seemed to need explication: for it being a common law, to which all men by nature, by desert, by divine appointment, are subject, to undergo death (for, *What man is he that shall not see death? It is appointed for men once to die, and after death judgment*[f]), why should not the dead comprehend all that are to be judged? as we see it expressed in the Revelation: *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God—and the dead were judged from the things written in the books, according to their works.*[g] The dead were judged; no mention is made of the living, wherefore some have interpreted the dead and living not for a distinction of persons, but of parts in men; the living souls and dead bodies of men: others have taken them metaphorically, *the living* (that is, righteous men, men endued with a spiritual life;) *the dead* (that is, men *dead in trespasses and sins,*[h] void of spiritual sense and

[y] Acts iii. 21; 1 Thess. iv. 16; i. 7.
[z] 1 Cor. xv. 52.
[a] Acts i. 11; *vide* 2 Thess. ii. 7, 9.
[b] Rev. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64.
[c] 1 Thess. iv. 16.
[d] Matt. xvi. 27.
[e] 2 Thess. i. 7.
[f] Psal. lxxxix. 48; Heb. ix. 27, ἀπόκειται.
[g] Rev. xx. 12.
[h] Eph. ii. 1.

activity.) But the difficulty mentioned is not so strong as to force upon us so remote and absonous expositions: St. Paul hath evidently enough showed us how to understand the words, and how to solve the knot propounded: that by the living are to be understood those who shall be found (and as it were surprised) alive when our Saviour comes; by the dead, all others, who before that time had died, and shall be raised at the sound of the last trump: *This we say to you* (saith he to the Thessalonians), *in the word of the Lord* (or as the word of the Lord), *that we which live, remaining at the presence of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.*[i] Our Lord, therefore, shall find some alive when he comes; therefore what is said of all men's being appointed to taste death, is to be understood with this exception; all but those whose death shall be prevented by our Lord's coming (which is set out as sudden and unexpected, like the coming of a thief in the night.[j]) Neither are those persons so exempted from death, but that they must undergo that which is equivalent thereto; a change, which shall render them alike prepared for judgment with them who have died: *Behold* (saith St. Paul again to the Corinthians), *I tell you a mystery; We shall not indeed all fall asleep* (or not all die), *but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye:*[k] which words, with sufficient evidence, declare the meaning of the expression here. The sum is, that all men, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what age soever, shall be judged; high and low, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, good and bad; the mightiest princes and lords, as well as the meanest subjects and slaves; the deepest scholars, as well as the simplest idiots: in a word, all men whatever, without any exception, without any acceptance of persons, must appear before this judge, must undergo this trial and sentence.

Thus shall he come to judge both quick and dead: than the belief of which point there is none more necessary, than the consideration of which none more profitable; necessary and profitable in many respects.

1. The faith and regard thereof will preserve us from disbelieving, from being offended with, from repining at the providence of God; from being dissatisfied with his proceedings and dispensations here, either toward ourselves or others.

2. It may also keep us from rash censure, and invading our Lord's office: *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant; to his own master he stands or falls: Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? we shall all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ:*[l] *There is one lawgiver, who can save or destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of hearts.*[m]

3. It may support and comfort us against all unjust and uncharitable censures,—groundless surmises and slanders,—undeserved scorns and reproaches of men; for that assuredly at that judgment right shall be done thee; thy innocence shall be cleared, thy honour vindicated and repaired; *God shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday:*[n] so that approving thy conscience to God, thou mayest say with St. Paul, *With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.*[o]

4. It is the most powerful and effectual means possible to beget sincerity in us; to render us circumspect; to stir us up to diligence in all our conversation, in our thoughts, words, and actions: for since the most inward recesses of our hearts must be searched out, our most secret designs and desires must be brought to light, what profit will it be to dissemble, to disguise, to conceal our thoughts? Since we must render an account of every thought that riseth in our minds (at least which is entertained there), of every word that passeth through our mouth, of every action we undertake, what reason have we,—

5. With more attentive and accurate regard to consider and mind what we do? Since it is certain we shall be judged,

[i] 1 Thess. iv. 15, ἐν λόγῳ Κυρίου.
[j] Matt. xxiv. 42; 1 Thess. v. 2.
[k] 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

[l] Rom. xiv. 4, 10.
[m] James iv. 12; 1 Cor. iv. 5.
[n] Psal. xxxvii. 6. [o] 1 Cor. iv. 3.

but uncertain when we shall be called thereto, how watchful are we concerned to be, how observant of our Saviour's admonition: *Watch, for ye do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh! If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know at what hour I shall come upon thee.*[p] It may be (for all we know) the next day, the next hour, when death shall call us to that prison, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar; and what a misery will it be to be surprised, to be found unprepared, unable to render a good account! *What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?*[q]

6. No persuasion, no consideration doth promise such efficacy towards the rousing of our passions, or duly ordering and employing them upon religious practice; especially it sets on work those two great engines and mighty springs of action, fear and hope. How can we believe and think of this point without being possessed with a hideous fear of abiding so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a condemnation (if we are sensible of having been very faulty or negligent in performance of our duty;) without a very comfortable hope of coming well off, of finding favour and mercy in that day, of being happily rewarded, if we are conscious to ourselves of having endeavoured seriously and carefully to please God, and obey his commandments?[r] if we can in our hearts say with St. Paul, *I have combated the good combat, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith;*[s] we may also say confidently with him, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord the righteous Judge, shall render unto me:* if, *by virtue of the grace of God, which appeared to all men*, and according to its instruction we have *denied ungodliness, worldly lusts*, and *lived soberly, righteously, and piously in this present world*, we may joyfully expect *the blessed hope and appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*[t]

[p] Matt. xxiv. 42; xxv. 13; Rev. iii. 3.
[q] 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.
[r] 2 Tim. i. 18.
[s] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
[t] Tit. ii. 12, 13.

I conclude, exhorting and wishing that the meditation of this most important business may be continually present to our minds; that we may seem (with that devout man) always to hear the last trumpet sounding in our ears, and piercing into our hearts; that so with a pious awe and a well grounded hope we may *expect the coming of our Lord, and love his appearance;*[u] that being hence restrained from all impious and vicious conversation, being moved to a watchful and circumspect pursuit of all virtue and piety, guiding our lives inoffensively in all good conscience toward God and man, we may be able to render a good account, and with comfort unexpressible hear those happy sentences: *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy; Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*[v] Unto the possession whereof, God in his mercy bring us, by the merits of our Saviour, in obedience to our Lord, according to the grace and mercy of our most righteous Judge, Jesus; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed forever, be all praise and glory. *Amen.*

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

The whole Creed (as was sometime formerly observed) being probably built upon, and seeming no other than an enlargement or dilation of that faith and confession required at baptism in the blessed Trinity; having surveyed the two former parts concerning the two first persons, God the Father, and God the Son; we are now come to the third great branch thereof, wherein we profess our belief in the Holy Spirit of God; which is in order the third grand object of our faith: whereof seeing there is here only a simple mention (as it were) made, without any description, any characters thereof expressed (such as in this Creed are assigned to the other Persons; such as in the Constantinopolitan, and other Creeds after it, are attributed to this), we must endeavour in some manner to supply that omission, by considering, 1. the *quid*; 2. the *quate*, thereof: first, I say,

[u] 2 Tim. iv. 8.
[v] Matt. xxv. 21, 34.

What is its nature? 2. What peculiar characters, offices, and operations (according to that mystical economy revealed in the gospel) are attributed and appertain thereto?

As for the first, the nature thereof, or what it is; we may observe that the word *spirit* (which primitively and properly signifies *wind*, or *breath*), because the wind is a being not immediately exposed to sense, yet of great mobility and force, discovering itself to be by so many great and conspicuous effects, therefore translated to denote those excellent intellectual beings, which by reason of their mroe pure and subtle nature, being otherwise indiscernible to sense, do yet by manifest operations discover their existence and great activity, are called *spirits:* such as are, in the first place, God Almighty (who invisibly pervades and penetrates and actuates all things, and is therefore by even Virgil himself, according to Lactantius and Macrobius's judgment, styled *spirit**), and next the angels, and then the souls of men.[w] Of these beings there is one, mentioned through the scripture, called *the Holy Spirit*, *the Spirit of God*, *the Spirit of Christ*, *the eternal Spirit;* and sometimes simply, by way of excellency, *the Spirit:* the nature of which Spirit we may best understand, by considering that the holy scripture doth attribute and ascribe to him, 1. Divine properties and perfections, communicably peculiar to God. 2. Divine works and operations. 3. Divine appellations and titles. 4. A co-ordination in dignity; a participation of divine honour and worship. 5. An essential union with God the Father and God the Son; together with, 6. A personal and relative distinction from them. Also, 7. A derivation of being from the two first Persons, with an intimate relation unto them springing thence. From the declaration and proof of which particulars, will plainly follow those doctrines which we are bound to believe, against those who have presumed to contradict and oppugn either the personality or the divinity of the Holy Ghost, or his procession from the Father and the Son.* Briefly, therefore, I say,

1. The scripture ascribes to the Holy Ghost the divine properties and perfections; the very word *holy* (so absolutely and specially, and characteristically attributed to him) seems itself to import so much: for (as it is in Hannah's prayer) *there is none holy as the Lord, there is none beside him;*[x] none absolutely, perfectly holy, but God: (*holy;* that is, by nature exalted and separated from all other things at a distance unapproachable, peculiarly venerable and august:) whence *the Holy one* is a name and distinguishing attribute of God.[y] The name *spirit*, simply put, may seem also to imply the same; denoting highest purity and actuality. But we have further the perfections of eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence (the most high perfections, and proper to God) attributed to him. Eternity; for he is expressly called αἰώνιον Πνεῦμα, *Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself spotless to God.*[z] Omnipresence; *Whither* (saith David) *shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*[a] The question imports a negation, and a reason thereof: there is no flying from God's Spirit, for that it is every where. Omniscience; *The Spirit searcheth all things* (that is, perfectly to the bottom understands all things), *even the depths of God;*[b] the things of God, which to know is as far above a creature, as for one man to know the thoughts, inclinations, and affections of another man; (such an argument St. Paul insinuates.) Particularly prescience, the knowledge of future events (which is the highest and hardest kind of knowledge, and immediately proper to God, and therefore called *divination*), is in a special manner every where appropriated to the Spirit, as the immediate fountain thereof; whence he is called *the prophetical Spirit.* To which we may add, independency of will and action; *For* (as St. Paul speaks) *all these things* (the production of all those

* ——Cœlum ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus alit.——*Virg. Æn.* vi.
Otherwhere,
—— Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrasque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum.——*Georg.* iv.

[w] Lact. i. 5.

* Macedonians, Sabellians, Socinians, and the like, ἑτεροδοξοῦντες.

[x] 1 Sam ii. 2.

[y] *Vide* Mr. Med. Disc. ii. p. 15.

[z] Heb. ix. 14.

[a] Psal. cxxxix. 7.

[b] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

excellent graces, the distribution of all those admirable gifts) *doth the one and the same Spirit work, dividing to every one as he pleaseth :*[c] Ubi vult spirat; *The Spirit blows where he pleaseth*, doth every where what he will.[d] Absolute goodness; *Thy Spirit is good* (saith David); *lead me into the land of uprightness.*[e] Perfect veracity, implied by the abstract word *truth; It is the Spirit* (saith St. John) *that witnesseth, for the Spirit is truth;*[f] truth itself, the highest, most perfect truth.

2. Lastly, omnipotence; demonstrated by those works which are said to be done by him; which are the greatest and hardest possible: such as creation; working of miracles; revelation of future events; vivification; renovation of men's minds; justification, and the like; which, both according to the nature of the thing and in scripture account, do require a power no less than infinite and most divine to effect them: the places are frequent and obvious, which ascribe such works to the Holy Spirit; I cannot stand to recite them.[g]

3. To the Holy Ghost are also assigned the divine names and titles, *Jehovah, Lord, God*, and those consequently which go along with them. For often, and upon divers occasions, the same things are said to be done by God, or to God, and by, or to the Spirit; one word interpreting, or concuring in signification with the other, by reason of that real identity which belongs to the things signified by them. It is said of the distrustful and disobedient Israelites in the Psalms, that *they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel:* that *they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies :*[h] which is expressed thus by the prophet Isaiah, *They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit.*[i] St. Peter, in the Acts, chargeth Ananias of having *lied to the Holy Spirit* and having *lied to God: Why* (saith he), *Ananias, hath Satan filled thy heart to lie unto* (or cozen) *the Holy Spirit? thou hast not lied unto men, but to God :*[j] questionless by both those expressions designing the same thing, and implying the Holy Ghost to be God. Our Saviour is said to be *conceived by the Holy Ghost*, and therefore to be called *the Son of God :*[k] he is said to perform miracles sometimes by the power of God, sometimes by the power of the Holy Ghost: *If I* (saith St. Matthew) *by the Holy Spirit cast out devils: If I by the finger of God cast them out*, saith St. Luke.[l] And it is ordinary for what is sometimes called *the word of God*, to be otherwise called *the word of the Spirit;*[m] proceeding from the same understanding, being dictated by the same operation. We are also said to be θεοδίδακτοι, taught of God, in respect to the instruction and guidance received from him: in fine, every good Christian is said to be *a temple; a temple of God;* because *the Spirit of God dwells in him.*[n]

4. A co-ordinate dignity; a parity of honour and worship with God the Father and God the Son is ascribed to the Holy Spirit: this appears signally in our Saviour's institution of baptism to be administered in the joint names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;[o] whereby we are initiated into the like faith and acknowledgment; are obliged to the same worship and obedience of all three Persons. The same appears by that benediction of St. Paul, imploring upon the Corinthians the divine favour and assistance, according to that mystical economy, which the gospel exhibits: *The grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God* (that is, of God the Father), *and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.*[p] As also from that place of St. Paul, *By Christ we have access in one Spirit to the Father :*[q] he having an equal share with God our Saviour in the gospel dispensation of grace and salvation unto men. We also have the same co-ordination clearly supposed in 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6: *There are* (saith St. Paul) *divisions of favours, but the same Spirit: and there are divisions of ministries, but the same Lord* (i. e. the same Christ:) *and there are divisions of operations, but the same God*, or Father: (all the gracious gifts of

[c] 1 Cor. xii. 11.
[d] John iii. 8.
[e] Psal. cxliii. 10.
[f] 1 John v. 6.
[g] Rom. xv. 19; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Rom. iv. 5.
[h] Psal. lxxviii. 41, 56.
[i] Isa. lxiii. 10.
[j] Acts v. 3, 4.
[k] Luke i. 35; Rom. xv. 19.
[l] Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20.
[m] 2 Cor. iii. 17.
[n] 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; Eph. ii. 22.
[o] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[p] 2 Cor. xiii. 14.
[q] Eph. ii. 18.

the gospel are bestowed; all the sacred ministries are managed; all the wonderful performances are brought to pass, by the joint and equal conduct and co-operation of these three divine Persons.) And that sovereign regard our Savour hath declared due to the honour and authority of the Holy Ghost, insomuch that blasphemy against him is a sin peculiarly irremissible, argues his divinity; since neither, according to the reason of the thing, could offending against the fame of a creature be capable of such aggravations; nor could God in a manner prefer the honour of a creature before his own.

5. That there is an essential union between the Holy Ghost and the other divine Persons, is both by evident consequence deducible from, and is immediately asserted in scripture. For that there is but one God, is there continually taught and inculcated upon us; and how it calls the Holy Ghost, we have seen; therefore necessarily the Holy Ghost doth partake of that one divine essence. Also, that the holy Ghost is God, is inferred from that comparison of St. Paul between the spirit of man in respect to man, and the Spirit of God in respect to God;[r] as the spirit of man is intrinsical to man, so the Spirit of God is to him: and by reason of the perfect simplicity of the divine nature, that which subsists in God must necessarily be God. In fine, St. John expressly tells us, *That there are three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one:*[s] they are one, and yet,

6. There is a personal distinction of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son: for they are three; three Persons: for that not only distinct names, but peculiar operations, are assigned to them; which should not be done without good reason, if there were no personal distinction: that which also appears from his being said to *proceed from the Father*, and to *be sent from him;* from his *being an advocate*, and *interceding with the Father;* his crying within us, *Abba, Father;* our having *access in him to the Father:*[t] as also, *his being sent by the Son;* his *glorifying him; receiving of his;* his *not speaking from himself:*[u] which expressions plainly argue a personal distinction. As do also our Saviour's birth by him, his performing miracles by him; in a word, God's executing all his purposes of grace and power by him.

7. Lastly, That the Holy Spirit doth derive the common divine essence from the Father and the Son, is thence sufficiently apparent, for that he is called *the Spirit of the Father*, and also *the Spirit of the Son:* the Spirit of the Father, because he doth ἐκ ποδεύεσθαι, in a manner incomprehensible doth proceed and emanate from the Father; is of him, is sent by him: for the same reason is he the Spirit of the Son; wherefore he is also expressly said to be *sent by the Son.*[v]

From these truths thus briefly declared, doth follow that the Holy Ghost is one of the divine Persons, in order the third, partaking of the divine nature, and receiving it by communication from the Father and the Son: which is all we intended to show concerning his nature. I proceed to consider the peculiar characters, offices, and operations of the Holy Spirit. There be many particular functions and operations in a special manner attributed and appropriated to the Holy Spirit; which, as they respect God, seem reducible to two general ones, the declaration of God's mind, and the execution of his will; as they respect man (for in regard to other beings the scripture doth not so much consider what he performs, as not so much concerning us to know), the producing in us all qualities and dispositions, the guiding and aiding us in all actions requisite or conducible to our eternal happiness and salvation, doth in a manner comprise them.

1. I say, the declaration of God's mind: whence he is called *the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation;* for that all supernatural light and instruction hath ever proceeded from him: he instructed all the prophets *that have been since the world began*, to know, he enabled them to speak, the mind of God concerning things present and future:[w] holy men (that have taught

[r] 1 Cor. ii. 11.

[s] 1 John v. 7.

[t] John xv. 26; xiv. 26; Rom. viii. 27; Eph. ii. 18; Gal. iv. 6.

[u] John xv. 26; xvi. 13, 14

[v] Matt. x. 20; John xiv. 26; xv. 26; Τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ Θεοῦ. 1 Cor. ii. 12; Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 9; 1 Pet. i. 11; Phil. i. 19.

[w] John xv. 26; Eph. i. 17; Rev. xix. 10; Luke i. 70.

men their duty, and led them in the way to happines) were but his instruments, and *spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:* by his inspiration the holy scriptures (the most full and certain witnesses of God's mind) were conceived; he *guided* the apostles *into all truth;* and by them instructed all the world in the knowledge of God's gracious intentions toward mankind and the holy mysteries of the gospel.[x] All the knowledge we can pretend to in these things doth proceed from his revelation, doth rely upon his authority.

2. The execution of God's will: whence he is called *the power of God* (the substantial power and virtue of God), and *the hand of God;*[y] and whatever God hath designed, he is said to perform by him. *By him he framed the world:* he *garnished the heavens*, as Job speaketh.[z] By him he *governs the world;*[a] all extraordinary works of providence (when God beside the common law and usual course of nature interposeth), all miraculous performances, being attributed to his energy; but especially by him (that which next is to be considered) he manages that work, by divine goodness so earnestly designed, of man's salvation: which he doth,

3. By working in us good dispositions and qualities; by guiding and aiding us in our actions. We are naturally void of those good dispostions of understanding, of will, of affection, which are necessary to make us anywise acceptable to God, fit to serve and please him, capable of any favour from him, of any true happiness in ourselves; our minds, I say, are blind and stupid, ignorant and prone to error, especially in things supernatural and abstracted from ordinary sense; our wills stubborn and froward, vain and unstable, inclining to evil, and averse from what is most truly good; our affections very irregular and unsettled: to remove which bad dispositions (inconsistent with God's friendship and favour, tending to misery), and to beget those contrary to them, the knowledge and belief of divine truth, a love of, and willing compliance with goodness; a well-composed, orderly, and steady frame of spirit, God in mercy hath appointed the Holy Spirit; who first opening our hearts, so as to let in and apprehend the light of divine truth propounded to us;[b] then by representation of proper arguments persuading us to embrace it, begets divine knowledge and faith in our minds (which is the work of illumination and instruction, the first part of this office;) then by continual impressions bends our inclinations, and molifies our hearts, and subdues our affections to a willing compliance with, a cheerful complacence in, that which is good and pleasing to God; so begetting all pious and virtuous inclinations in us, reverence to God, charity to men, sobriety and purity, and the rest of those amiable and heavenly virtues (which is the work of sanctification, another great part of his office:) both which together (illumination of our mind, sanctification of our will and affections) do constitute that work which is styled *the regeneration, renovation, vivification, new creation, resurrection; putting off the old, putting on the new man;* of a man; the faculties of our souls being so much changed, and we made, as it were, other men thereby; able and apt to do that to which before we were altogether indisposed and unfit.[c] Neither only doth he alter and constitute our dispositions, but he directs and governs our actions; leading and moving us in the ways of obedience to God's will and law. As we live by him (have a new spiritual life implanted in us), so we walk by him, by his continual guidance and assistance.[d] He reclaims us from sin and error; supports and strengthens us in temptation; advises, excites, encourages us to works of virtue and piety: particularly he guides and quickens us in devotion, showing us what we should ask, raising in us holy desires and comfortable hopes thereof, disposing us to approach unto God with fit dispositions of love, and reverence, and humble confidence.[e]

It is also a notable part of the Holy Spirit's office to comfort and sustain us,

[x] 2 Pet. i. 21; 2 Tim. iii. 16; John xvi. 13; *vide* 1 Cor. ii. 10; Eph. iii. 5.
[y] Luke i. 35; xi. 19.
[z] Psal. xxxiii. 6; Job. xxvi. 13.
[a] Gen. i. 1.
[b] Acts xvi. 14.
[c] Tit. iii. 5; Eph. iv. 23; ii. 5; Col. ii. 13, 12; Eph. ii. 10; iv. 24; 2 Cor. v. 17.
[d] Gal. v. 25; Rom. viii. 14.
[e] Rom. viii. 26, 27; 1 John v. 14.

as in all our religious practice, so particularly in our doubts, difficulties, distresses, and afflictions; to beget joy, peace, and satisfaction in us, in all our doings and all our sufferings: whence he hath the title of *Comforter*.[f]

It is also a great part thereof to assure us of God's love and favour; that we are his children; and to confirm us in the hopes of our everlasting inheritance.[g] We feeling ourselves to live by him, to love God and goodness, to desire and delight in pleasing God, are thereby raised to hope God loves and favours us; and that he, having by so authentic a seal ratified his word and promise; having already bestowed so sure a pledge, so precious an earnest, so plentiful first-fruits, will not fail to make good the remainder designed and promised us, of everlasting joy and bliss.

Lastly, The Holy Ghost doth intercede for us with God; is our advocate and assistant in the presenting our supplications, and procuring our good: he cries in us; he pleads for us to God: whence he is peculiarly called *Παράκλητος*: that is, one who is called in by his good word or countenance to aid him whose cause is to be examined, or whose petition is to be considered.

To which things I may add, that the Holy Ghost is designed to be, as it were, the soul which informs, enlivens, and actuates the whole body of the church;[h] connecting and containing together the members thereof in spiritual union, life, and motion; especially quickening and moving the principal members (the governors and pastors) thereof; constituting them in their function, qualifying them for the discharge thereof, guiding and assisting them therein.[i]

Such is the office, such the operations, of the Holy Ghost; the which we should more distinctly and fully consider, if the time and nature of this exercise would give leave.

The use of these doctrines (the influence the belief and consideration of this article should have upon our practice) is briefly, 1. To oblige us to render all due honour and adoration to the divine majesty of the blessed Spirit. 2. To work in us an humble affection and a devout thankfulness to God for so inestimable a favour conferred upon us, such as is the presence and inhabitation, the counsel, conduct, and assistance, of God's holy Spirit in us: him we must acknowledge the author of our spiritual life, of all good dispositions in us, of all good works performed by us, of all happiness obtainable by us; to him we must render all thanks and praise. Therefore, 3. To excite us to desire earnestly, and pray for God's Spirit, the fountain of such excellent benefits, such graces, such gifts, such privileges, such joys, and blessings unexpressible: if we heartily invite him, if we fervently pray for him, he will certainly come; so hath our Saviour promised, *that our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them which ask him.*[j] 4. We should endeavour to demean ourselves well toward the Holy Spirit; yielding to that heavenly guest, vouchsafing to come unto us, a ready entrance and kind welcome into our hearts; entertaining him with all possible respect and observance; hearkening attentively to his holy suggestions, and carefully obeying them; not quenching the divine light, or devout heat he kindles in us; not resisting his kindly motions and persuasions; not grieving or vexing him; that so with satisfaction he may continue and abide with us, to our infinite benefit and comfort: it should engage us to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that we may be fit temples for so holy and pure a Spirit to dwell in, lest he loath and forsake us. 5. It is matter of comfort and encouragement (exceedingly useful and necessary for us) to consider, that we have such a guide and assistant in our religious practice and spiritual warfare. If our lusts be strong, our temptations great, our enemies mighty, we need not be disheartened, having this all-wise and all-mighty friend to advise and help us: his grace is sufficient for us, against all the strengths of hell, flesh, and the world. Let our duty be never so hard, and our natural force never so weak, we shall be able to do all things by him that strengtheneth us; if we will but faithfully apply our-

[f] Rom. xv. 13; 1 Pet. i. 8; Heb. iii. 6.
[g] 2 Cor. v. 5; i. 22; Eph. i. 14.
[h] 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.
[i] Acts xx. 28; Eph. iv. 12.
[j] Luke xi. 13.

selves to him for his aid, we cannot fail of good success.

The Holy Catholic Church.[k]

The Holy Catholic Church: in the more ancient forms it ran only, *Holy Church* (the word *Catholic* being left out;) and in some of them it had not the same position as now, being put in the last place: and it seems in the most ancient symbols the church was not propounded as an object of faith directly and immediately, but was mentioned obliquely, upon occasion of remission of sins ministered by it, of eternal life obtained in it: as we may reasonably deem from that notable place in St. Cyprian: *Nam cum dicunt* (when they profess in the symbol at baptism), *credis remissionem peccatorum et vitam æternam per ecclesiam:*[l] to which kind of expression that place in Tertull. de Baptismo seems to allude, *Cum sub tribus et testatio fidei, et sponsio salutis pignorentur, necessario adjicitur ecclesiæ mentio.*[m] And if we consult the most ancient summaries of faith extant in Irenæus and Tertullian, and composed by them, questionless according to the general sense of their times, we shall not find this article propounded; not even in the Nicene Creed itself.[n] It is therefore most unprobable that this article (either in substance, or at least according to this manner of proposal and expression) is of a later standing than the rest; being introduced (as is likely) upon occasion of those many heresies and schisms, which continually sprang up, to secure the truth of Christian doctrine, the authority of ecclesiastical discipline, the peace and unity of the church, by obliging men to profess their disclaiming any consent or conspiracy with those erroneous and contentious people (who had devised new, destructive, or dangerous conceits against the general consent of Christians, and drove on factions contrary to the common order and peace of the church;) to profess, I say, their disclaiming such heretical principles and factious proceedings; and their constant adherence to the doctrines generally embraced by the churches founded and instructed by the apostles; as also their persistance in concord and communion with them; their readiness to observe the received customs and practices derived by them from apostolical institution; their submission to the laws and disciplines established in them by lawful authority. This I conceive to have been the meaning of them who first inserted this article, of believing the holy church, into the Creed: *I believe;* that is, I adhere unto (for as we did at first observe, *belief* here is to be understood as the nature of the matter should require), I adhere unto, or am persuaded that I ought to adhere unto, that body of Christians which, diffused over the world, retains the faith taught, the discipline settled, the practices appointed, by our Lord and his apostles.

And that men should be obliged to do thus, there was ground both in the reason of the thing and in scripture. In reason, there being no more proper or effectual argument to assure us that any doctrine is true, or practice warrantable, to convince sectaries deviating from truth or duty, than the consent of all churches, of whom (being so distant in place, language, humour, custom), it is not imaginable that they should soon or easily conspire in forsaking the doctrines inculcated by the apostles, or the practices instituted by them: which argument, pressed by Tertullian, Irenæus, and other ancient defenders of Christian truth and peace, may well, as in matters of this kind, go for a demonstration: and that sentence of Tertullian* may well pass for a certain principle and axiom: *Quod apud multos unum invenitur, non est erratum, sed traditum.*[o]

And for scripture, as it foretels that pernicious heresies should be introduced; that *many false prophets should arise, and seduce many;* that *grievous wolves should come in, not sparing the flock;* and *men should arise, speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them;*[p] as they warn us to *take heed of such men*, to *reject* and

[k] Eph. iv. 4. [l] Epist. ad Magnum.
[m] Cap. vi.
[n] *Vide* lib. de Symbolo ad Catechumenos; Theodoret. i. 12, Hist.

* De præscr. cap. 28.—Constat id esse ab apostolis traditum, quod apud ecclesias apostolorum fuerit sacrosanctum.
[o] Tertul. de præscript. Iren. 1, 2, 3, &c.
[p] 2 Pet. ii. 1; Acts xx. 29, 30; Matt. xxiv. 11; vii. 15; Tit. iii. 10.

refuse heretics, to *mark those which make divisions and scandals* beside the doctrine which Christians had learnt, and *to decline from them*; to *stand off* (ἀφιστάναι) *from such men as do* ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, *teach things different from* apostolical doctrine, and *do not consent to wholesome words* (the words of our Lord Jesus Christ), *and the doctrine according to godliness*;[q] as it teacheth us that heresies and factions are works of the flesh [proceeding from pride and ambition, self-interest and covetousness, peevish and perverse humour, blindness and vanity, rashness and instability, dotage, distemper, and corruption of mind, deceit, cozenage, craft, and hypocrisy, want of good conscience and reverence to God], so it also describes the universality of them who stick to the truth, and observe the law of Christ; are disposed to charity and peace *with all those who call upon our Lord with a pure mind* (that is, with all sincere Christians;) *to be one body*, knit together and compacted of parts affording mutual aid and supply to its nourishment; and joined to, deriving sense and motion from, *one Head; and informed by one Spirit*; as one house, *built upon the foundation of prophets and apostles, Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building is fitly framed and connected*;[r] as one nation or people, subject to the same law and goverment (used to the same language, custom, and conversation;) one city, one family; one flock under one shepherd; lastly, one church or congregation: for, as sometimes every particular assembly of Christians, and sometimes a larger collection of particular societies, combined together in one order, or under one government, are termed churches (ἐκκλησίαι), so the whole aggregation of all churches, of all Christian people in the world, is frequently called *the church*; even as the whole body of those who lived in profession and obedience to the Jewish law (which was a type and image of the Christian church) was called קהל (*Cahal*), ἐκκλησία, *the congregation*; from whence I conceive this name was taken; and as among them that word did signify sometimes any particular assembly, sometimes the whole body of such persons, who had right and obligation to assemble for the service of God;* so correspondently was the word used in the New Testament; sometimes for any society lesser or greater; sometimes for the whole body of God's new people; all the true subjects and servants of Christ; that is, for the catholic or universal society of the faithful: yet even in this latter sense there is some distinction; for sometimes it is taken in a sense (partly extensive, partly restrained), so as to signify all those good men, and only such, which in all places and all times did or shall faithfully worship and serve God; sometimes in a sense (in one respect more wide, in another more strict) for all those who at present, in any age, through all parts of the world, do openly profess the sincere faith and obedience of Christ; maintaining an external practice agreeable to that profession: according to both which senses we may interpret *the Holy Catholic Church* here, they being, as to the duty required of us, conjoined and coordinate: for whatever is said of the church in scripture (all the characters and commendations attributed to it;) as it doth principally agree to it in the first of these senses, so it doth in some kind and measure agree to the latter: and therefore (without distinguishing) we may say that this is the holy catholic church which we believe; the *Zion which the Lord hath chosen, which he hath desired for his habitation, where he hath resolved to place his rest and residence for ever.*[s] *The mountain seated above all mountains, unto which all nations should flow: The house of God built upon a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail*;[t] the pillar and firmament of truth, which it by its profession and practice, in a manner supporteth and maintaineth; *The new Jerusalem and city of God; the mother of us all; the beloved spouse of the Lamb; the elect generation, royal priesthood, holy nation,*

[q] Rom. xvi. 17; Col. ii. 8; 2 Thess. i. 6; 1 Tim. vi. 3, 5.

[r] Eph. iv. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 22; Eph. i. 22; iv. 16; Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12; Eph. iv. 3, 4; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. ii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5; ii. 19; Heb. xii. 23; Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2, 10.

* Ubi tres sunt, etiam laici, ibi ecclesia est. —*Tertull. Exh. Cast.*

[s] Psal. cxxxii. 13.

[t] Isa. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1; Matt. xvi. 18.

peculiar people: The church which Christ hath purchased with his own blood; which he delivered himself for, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing; but that it might be holy and unblemished.[u]

Holy we see it is expressly said to be in Christ's design: holy, as consisting of persons separated from the world (from profane and vain conversation), and wholly devoted to God's service; *chosen to be saints, and without blemish before God in love;* persons *consecrated and constituted priests, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ.*[v] Holy, as in many respects peculiarly related to God; *as his chosen people* (in which respect the Jews were anciently called *a holy*, which is interpreted a chosen, special, peculiar, precious, separate people), *as his house and temple;*[w] wherein he in a special manner doth reside, wherein he is continually worshipped: *Now the temple of God is holy, whose temple are you,*[x] saith St. Paul; as οἰκεῖοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, his domestics and familiars; as his children. Holy, as *redeemed by Christ, cleansed by his blood, sanctified by his Spirit; as professing a holy faith; as partakers of a holy and heavenly calling: as endued with holy graces and dispositions, performing holy services, obliged to holy conversation.*[y]

The belief and consideration of which point doth serve, 1. To engage us to persist in the truth of Christian doctrine, delivered by our Saviour and his apostles, attested unto by the general consent of Christians; avoiding all novelties of opinion; *not being carried about with various and strange doctrines; not being like children tossed with waves, and carried about with every wind of doctrine,*[z] in the cozenage of men, in craft, according to the method (or artifice) of deceit; (not being deluded with fine words, or fair pretences of many innovators;) but ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, *holding the truth in love:* 2. In love; that is another duty we are hence obliged to; to maintain a hearty charity and good affection toward all good Christians; charity, which is the band that unites the church, which preserves it in a sweet order and unity: consequently, 3. Readily to correspond and communicate with all good Christians (all societies sincerely professing and practising faith, charity, and obedience to our Lord), communicating, I say, in all offices of piety: 4. Submitting to all lawful order and discipline; studying peace, and to our power promoting concord among them: consequently, 5. To disavow and shun all factious combinations whatever of men corrupting the truth, or disturbing the peace of the church. In fine, sincerely to wish in our hearts, to pray earnestly for, to promote by our best endeavours, the peace and prosperity of that holy catholic church, whereof we should be members and children: all which things St. Paul directs us to in those few words, *Pursue righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with those that call upon* (or are called by the name of) *the Lord with a pure heart.*[a] I proceed.

The Communion of Saints.

The words were not extant in any of the ancient creeds, but were afterwards inserted: nor (as I conceive) doth the meaning of them much differ from what was intended in the precedent article, concerning the catholic church; and perhaps it was adjoined thereto, by way of apposition, for interpretation thereof. For it seems the meaning of them is this: that all the saints (those which are so either in outward esteem, as professing Christian faith and obedience; or those which are so in heart and inward disposition; those which either now converse upon earth, or which are received into heaven; all the saints) either in obligation should, or in effect do, communicate, partake, join together, consent, and agree in what concerns saints or members of the same body; in believing and acknowledging the same heavenly truth;

[u] Rev. iii. 12; Gal. iv. 26; Rev. xix. 7; Matt. xxii. 2; xxv. 10; Eph. v. 25, &c.; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Acts xx. 28; Eph. v. 25, &c.

[v] 1 Pet. ii. 18; 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23; Eph. i. 4; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Rev. i. 6; v. 10.

[w] Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18; Exod. xix. 5, 6.

[x] 1 Cor. iii. 17.

[y] Jude 20; 2 Tim. i. 9; Heb. iii. 1; Rom. xii. 1, &c.; 1 Pet. i. 15.

[z] Heb. xiii. 9; Eph. iv. 14.

[a] 2 Tim. ii. 22.

in performance of devotions and offices of piety toward God, with and for one another; in charitable affection and good-will toward each other; in affording mutual assistance and supplies toward each other's either temporal or spiritual good; in mutual condolency and compassion of each other's evil; congratulation and complacency in each other's good; *in minding* (according to St. Paul's words) *with care the same thing for one another: so that if one member suffers, all the members suffer together with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*[b] This briefly seems to be the meaning of this point; and I need not further labour to show the uses thereof; the doctrine so plainly carrying its obligation and use in its face.

CONCERNING THE POWER OF THE KEYS.

I treated last upon the *Catholic Church* and *Communion of saints:* between that article and that which immediately follows concerning the *remission of sins*, I think it convenient to interpose a brief consideration upon *the Power of the Keys;* the which we are directed and enjoined sometime to discourse on, and may do it, as it seems, here most seasonably, it having so near a relation to the matter of both those articles; the church, in which, by which, for which, it is exercised (by it also the communion of saints being maintained and preserved), and the remission of sins, which (especially as to be understood here) is a partial and most considerable effect or consequent of its use. For though remission of sins may be taken in its utmost latitude for all remission indulged by God, and by what means, in what manner, upon what account soever dispensed; yet according to the intention of those who compiled the Creed, it seems principally to design that formal remission of sins which was consigned by the church's ministry; this being performed by virtue of a power imparted by Christ to the church, called, as we shall see, *the Power of the Keys;* concerning which, therefore, it will not be unseasonable for us here briefly to discourse.

As God Almighty, being King and Sovereign Lord of the world, doth govern it partly by his own immediate hand of Providence, partly by the mediation of visible deputies and vicegerents constituted by him in several provinces of that his kingdom, who, receiving authority from him, are obliged under him to govern in their respective places, according to rules of justice and equity prescribed by him, to the promotion of his honour and praise of his name, to the procurement of his subjects' benefit and welfare (consisting chiefly in their leading a safe, quiet, and commodious life here, with enjoyment of those comforts which are suitable to men's nature), each in his province most particularly regarding the welfare of those subjects committed to their charge, yet so as withal to respect the common peace and prosperity of mankind, maintaining (so far as may be) good correspondency with the rest, observing the rules of justice and humanity toward all: this authority committed to them by God containing all powers necessary or conducible to those purposes; the power of making and imposing laws; of propounding and bestowing rewards; of appointing and inflicting punishment; with obligation on the subjects' part to entire obedience and submission.

In the same (or in a very like) manner doth Christ, the Head and supreme Governor of the church, administer his spiritual kingdom; partly by the immediate direction and governance of his Holy Spirit, partly by his presidency of governors appointed by him in several provinces and societies thereof, to manage things in such order as may best conduce first to his glory and service (as well by the propagation and enlargement of this empire, as preservation and maintenance thereof in good condition, by procuring due reverence to his person and obedience to his laws), as may also confer to the best advantage of his subjects, and their spiritual welfare (consisting in their being instructed in duty, and disposed to perform it, their being purified from sin, and perfected in holiness, and fitted for the possession of that eternal happiness to which they are called, designed for them;) each in his province and so-

[b] 1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.

ciety (yet so as withal to respect the good of the whole body, maintaining charitable affection toward, and peaceable commerce with, the rest) being particularly obliged to promote those ends; such authority including all power requisite to that purpose; of establishing fit orders and rules to be observed in their respective societies; of dispensing encouragements and inflicting penalties, agreeable to the nature of their office, and conducible to their designment; the subjects of this kingdom being obliged to obedience and compliance with those orders, to submit to those penalties and censures. Now this authority (either all or a great part of it) is commonly called *Potestas Clavium*, by a name taken from those words of our Saviour, wherein he promiseth St. Peter that he would *give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven:*[c] concerning which promise we must first observe, that however it was made to St. Peter upon a special occasion, yet the matter thereof was not peculiar and restrained to his person; for the particulars conjoined therewith, and which explain the meaning thereof, are otherwhere assigned to others, as well as him. Christ there declares, that upon him he *will build his church;* and otherwhere we are informed that the church is built upon the *foundation of the prophets and apostles:* he promises that what he shall *bind or loose upon earth shall be bound or loosed in heaven;*[d] and the same privilege is promised otherwhere, in express terms, to any congregation or society of Christians, and in terms equivalent to a certain meeting of disciples. This privilege therefore, and authority, was by our Saviour committed to the church; and if to the church, then (as to its use and exercise) to the governors thereof, who act in behalf thereof;* to whom its preservation is commended, upon whom the care of its welfare, its peace, its honour, is incumbent: the which we shall at present suppose, and which by the nature, practice, end, and design of this power, will further appear.

At present, for the better understanding the nature and extent of this power, we will consider, 1. Its name. 2. its object, or correlative term. 3. The equivalent phrases by which it is expressed or explained. 4. The practice and exercise thereof. 5. The rise and occasion of its institution. 6. The necessity and usefulness thereof. From the consideration of which particulars we may collect wherein it consists, to what it tends, how far it extends. We will touch them briefly.

1. The name *keys*, being metaphorical, implies the thing thereby designed in its nature, or some chief property (most obvious and conspicuous) to resemble keys. Now they (as being instruments designed to no other purpose) have no other nature or property than opening or shutting the avenues or passages from one place to another; and consequently their effects being either to give entrance and admission, or to detain and keep within, or to stop the passage and exclude from a place; necessarily all or some of these actions (or somewhat answerable and like thereto) must agree to this power, in respect to that state or place which it refers to: it must be therefore a power either admissive into, or retentive within, or exclusive from, or all these together, in respect to the kingdom of heaven, whereof it is called *the keys;* no other reason being conceivable of its obtaining that appellation; and we see, when this metaphor is used in like cases, either all or one of these effects are by way of interpretation expressed; as when of the *holy* and *true* one (that is, of our Saviour) it is said in the Revelation, *That he hath the key of David;* it is subjoined, *He openeth, and none shutteth; he shutteth, and none openeth.*[e] And when our Saviour imputes to the lawyers, that they *took away the key of knowledge*, he explains the meaning of his expression by adding, *that they would not enter themselves, and those who were entering they hindered:*[f] and likewise in St. Matthew, concerning the Scribes and Pharisees; *Ye shut the kingdom of heaven* (the same thing as here) *before men; for yourselves do not enter, nor do you suffer those that are entering.*[g] Whence, it seems, may be collected, that this pow-

* Claves illas regni cœlorum in beato Petro cuncti suscepimus sacerdotes.—*Ambros. Ep.* 83.

[c] Matt. xvi. 19.

[d] Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14; Matt. xviii. 18; John. xx. 23.

[e] Rev. iii. 7.

[f] Luke xi. 52.

[g] Matt. xxiii. 13.

er (this having the keys) is a power of admission into, and exclusion from, the place or state which it relates to: which we must next consider; for such must this power be, as its term or object doth admit or require.

2. As to the term it relates to, *the kingdom of heaven*, that, according to the New Testament use, is capable especially of two acceptions. It first commonly signifies the state or constitution of religion under the gospel, in opposition or contradistinction to the state of things under the ancient law. In the time of the law, God's kingdom was in a manner earthly; the land of Israel was his dominion, in Salem was his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion; Jerusalem was his royal seat (*the city of the great King*,[h]) the temple there his palace; he governed more immediately by oracles from time to time put into the mouth of his priests and prophets, consulting him for orders and directions; he received more visible services and homages from his subjects; he granted earthly conveniences and privileges for them; he encouraged them to the obedience of his law by promises of temporal reward; deterred them from disobedience and disloyalty by threatening temporal pains and damages: but under the evangelical dispensation, as God's kingdom is more capacious and unlimited in extension, so he hath assumed no peculiar residence upon earth, nor is worshipped otherwise than as being in heaven, the natural seat of his special majesty and glory; he rules by a law perpetual and immutable, revealed from thence; the sacrifices and adorations he requires are spiritual and invisible for the most part, and addressed thither; the privileges appertaining to the subject of this kingdom chiefly refer thither; they are allured to obedience by rewards to be conferred there; are withdrawn from disobedience by penalties referring to a future state. This state therefore of things is called *the kingdom of heaven, of God, of Christ*:* that which was coming and approaching in the time of our Saviour's humble sojourning upon earth, is now present, he reigning in heaven, into which they are said to be translated; to have *access unto the heavenly Jerusalem*; to be *made fellow-citizens and co-heirs with the saints in light*; to have *their conversation in heaven*; to *partake a heavenly calling*; to be *seated together with Christ in heavenly places*;[i] who with sincere persuasion of mind embrace the doctrine of Christ, with firm resolution submit to his law, becoming thereby subjects of this heavenly kingdom, undertaking the obligations, and partaking the privileges belonging thereto. This state, I say, or relation, is thus called; or (which comes to the same thing, and makes no alteration as to the matter in hand) taking the word *personally* (and concretely as it were), the society of men put into such a state, the body of persons standing so related (that is, the church of Christ), may be called *the kingdom of heaven*. This acception is so frequent and obvious, that it is needless to cite instances, or stand upon the confirmation thereof: but the phrase is also sometime taken for the perfection or utmost improvement of this state; that *αἰώνιος βασιλεία, everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*,[j] as St. Peter calls it; that state of glory and bliss, into which all good Christians, who shall through this temporal life persist in faithful obedience unto God, shall hereafter be received; that kingdom, into which *not every one who saith, Lord, Lord* (who makes an external profession or pretence), *but he that doeth the will of God, who is in heaven, shall enter*.[k] Now whereas these two states (one being a state of grace and favour with God here, the other of glory and joy with God hereafter[l]) are in their nature, and according to their prime intention, inseparably coherent, one being subordinate to the other; that, as a step or degree, a way or tendency to this; this, a completion and consummation of that; that being supposed as precedent in order to this, this in design consequent upon that; therefore what immediately concerns one, doth by consequence respect the other: and in our case, a power to open or shut, to admit into or exclude from, the state of grace, may be sup-

* Ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία, ἐγγίζουσα, &c.

[h] Psal. cxiv. 2; lxxvi. 2.

[i] Col. i. 12, 13; Eph. ii. 19; Phil. iii. 20; Heb. iii. 1; xii. 22.

[j] 2 Pet. i. 11.

[k] Matt. vii. 21.

[l] Acts xx. 24.

posed and said in a manner consequently to be a power of opening and shutting the state of glory hereafter; and reciprocally, both jointly may be well understood in their kind and order. But since the persons to whom this power is imparted do exercise it here (*and what thou shalt bind or loose upon earth*,[m] saith our Saviour, implying the use of that power which he promised to communicate to St. Peter;) since the immediate effects thereof are here below, therefore it seems fit that we understand the kingdom of heaven in our case more directly and immediately the present kingdom of heaven, or state of grace into which Christians are here received (or, if you please, the society itself of persons so instated;) though more remotely, and by consequence, it may imply the state of glory hereafter.

We should therefore consider how these states (especially that of grace here more immediately respected) may be opened or shut; how one man may be enabled or empowered to permit entrance, or debar others from it: and this we may conceive effectible either by yielding some real furtherance on one side, or some effectual hinderance on the other, in respect of getting into or abiding in this state; or else by some formal act of judgment and authority, by virtue of which some are admitted to partake the rights and privileges of this state, or some excluded and rendered incapable thereof. I say, first, by real furtherance or hinderance; as on the one side, they who instruct or show the way, who persuade, who encourage men to enter, who afford any means or opportunities, may be said to open this state; (as in like manner it is said that *God did open to the Gentiles a door of faith*;[n] and St. Paul saith, *a great and effectual door was opened to him at Ephesus*, and another at Troas; and he exhorts the Colossians to pray *that God would open to him θύραν τοῦ λόγου, a door of preaching the mystery of Christ*;[o] where opening a door denotes ministering opportunities and advantages of performing the things specified.) And on the other side, they who keep from knowing the way which leads thither, who dissuade or discourage from entering, who subtract the means or prevent opportunities of doing it, who interpose obstacles or obstructions of difficulty, danger, or damage, may be said to shut, or exclude; (thus are the Scribes said *to shut the kingdom of heaven*;[p]) that is, to hinder men from embracing the doctrine, or submitting to the rule of Christ, by discouraging them from giving attention and credence to what he taught (which is otherwhere called *taking away the key of knowledge*;[q]) as also by terrifying them from acknowledgment of the truth they saw and liked, by reproaches, persecutions, punishments laid on them who did it. Thus may this state be opened and shut. As also it may be so by judicial and authoritative acts; by way of consent and approbation declared, of decision and sentence pronounced: in such manner as we duly see men admitted into, and debarred from, the state of citizens and freemen (from enjoying in esteem and effect the capacities and immunities belonging to the members of such or such societies and corporations), by the consent or dissent, approbation or refusal, decree or sentence, formally signified, of persons empowered to those purposes. Now regarding the nature of that state whereof we are speaking, as to real furtherance, since respect to God's glory and man's salvation obliges all men to endeavour that men be brought into this state, the same being in a special manner incumbent upon the governors and pastors of the church; therefore this may be conceived one way of opening, or one part of this power; although to shut by way of real hinderance, in the manner described, cannot properly belong to any, duty and charity forbidding really and finally to obstruct entrance into the state of grace; the Scribes and lawyers being blamed for not suffering men (otherwise willing and disposed) to enter into the kingdom of heaven. As to the other kind of opening and shutting, by legal proceeding: as all persons, according to charitable estimation, worthy and well qualified, ought to be admitted thereinto; so neither, according to the reason of the thing itself, nor in regard to the public benefit, nor respecting the good of the

[m] Matt. xvi. 19. [n] Acts xiv. 27.
[o] 1 Cor. xvi. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 12; Col. iv. 3.
[p] Matt. xxiii. 13. [q] Luke xi. 52.

persons pretending thereto, should some be permitted to enjoy the communion thereof: therefore, to distinguish and separate such persons, the appointment and use of such a power is requisite. This will appear more plainly when we come to consider the necessity and utility of this power. Further,

3. For the phrases equivalent, by which in places of the gospel most parallel this power is expressed and explained, they are especially those of binding and loosing, of retaining and remitting sins. As for binding and loosing: when our Saviour had promised to bestow upon St. Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he signifies what effect the use of them should produce, by adding conjunctively, *And whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed in heaven.*[r]

Now, *binding* may signify any kind of determination, of restraint, of detention, upon persons or things; and *loosing*, that which is opposite thereto, the leaving indifferent, laying open, setting free of any person or thing respectively. He that (having good authority to do so) enjoins or prohibits any thing, doth bind that thing (determining its moral quality, making it to be good or bad, lawful or unlawful), and binds the persons concerned to observation or abstinence; he that permits the same thing to be done, or dispenses with its doing, may be said to loose: thus all laws are bonds, and are said to oblige; and the removing or suspending their force, in whole or in part (by abrogation, or dispensation, or exception), is consequently a loosing, or relaxation; and the power of binding and loosing thus would be a power legislative, of making and repealing laws and rules of action; and in some analogy hereto, the power (with authority and by office) of interpreting laws, that is, of determining and declaring what is commanded, what prohibited, what permitted, may be called a *power of binding and loosing* (and if we believe Mr. Selden, and Grotius perhaps from him, in Matt. xvi. is so commonly termed among Jewish writers:) also the exercise of any jurisdiction, the decision of any case, the warding any amends to be done, any mulct to be imposed, any punishment to be inflicted, is a binding; to which kind of binding it seems plain that place doth more particularly refer, wherein our Saviour pronounces valid the arbitration between persons in difference made by one or two friends,[s] or (if that cannot terminate the controversy) the final judgment of the church, concerning which he with asseveration pronounces, *Amen* (*verily*), *I say unto you, that whatsoever ye* (a church of you my disciples) *shall* (viz. in this manner, by way of jurisdiction or arbitration) *bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed in heaven:* all your sentences and decisions (duly and impartially made) shall be valid and ratified by God himself. Also the result of any contract is an obligation, and they who make or enter into it do bind the parties concerned (themselves and others.) Moreover, the detaining any how under one's power or disposal, is binding; and the setting free thence, a loosing answerable thereto: *Ought not*, saith our Saviour, *this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound these eighteen years, to be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?*[t] That which is here called *bound by Satan*, is otherwhere expressed by καταδυναστεύεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ Διαβόλου (being under the power and dominion of the Devil.[u]) Also binding may imply detaining in any present condition (as suppose a condition of guilt, of disfavour, of obnoxiousness to wrath and punishment, either *positively*, by keeping on the shackles which hold them, or *negatively*, by withdrawing the means of getting out;) and correspondently, loosing is a freeing from such a state, by removing the causes which hindered, or applying the means which procure liberty. And to this last sense the other equivalent phrase (used in St. John, or *retaining* and *remitting of sins*) doth seem to refer: *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained:*[v] that is, whomsoever ye shall think fit to detain in a stain of guilt, to refuse pardon and

[r] Matt. xvi. 19.

[s] Matt. xviii. 18.

[t] Luke xiii. 16.

[u] Acts x. 38.

[v] John xx. 23.

reconcilment unto, they shall continue in such state, that they shall rest deprived of those benefits; whomsoever ye shall judge worthy to be absolved from guilt, and received unto favour, they shall effectually be pardoned and reconciled in God's sight; your act, in respect to that remission or retention, shall be approved and ratified in heaven. Now, from these considerations concerning the name of this power, and the term or object thereof, and of the phrase in some measure equivalent to that whereby it is expressed, although we may probably infer somewhat concerning the nature thereof, yet the perfect nature and full extent thereof seems best deducible from that which we must next consider.

4. The practice and exercise of this power; which being by our Saviour committed to his church, and to the apostles as governors thereof, and acting in its behalf, we cannot suppose they would act beyond or beside it. What we see them (in way of office and authority) doing, applicable and agreeable to the meaning of those words, as hitherto in some sort explained, we may well believe done by virtue of this power so expressly by our Lord bestowed on them: and the like we may reasonably suppose concerning the churches nearly succeeding to their times, that what they generally practiced in way of government was by authority, not arbitrarily assumed to themselves, but derived from Christ's donation and appointment, declared to be so, directed and determined to particular use by the apostles, when they planted and settled each church. Now for the apostles' practice: We find, as (first) to the opening part of this power, that they did with great earnestness and diligence labour to bring men into the kingdom of heaven by instruction, invitation, and persuasion (not sparing any pains, not regarding any difficulty, not shunning any danger for the effecting hereof:) *Not* (to use St. Paul's words in the Acts) *keeping back any thing that was profitable, but showing and teaching them publicly from house to house, thoroughly testifying both to Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*[w] That having thus induced men, and qualified them to enter (by entertaining the doctrine of Christ, and resolution to live according thereto), they did actually admit them into this state by a solemn act, containing a symbolical representation of this state, with the benefits and privileges accompanying it; declaring the persons so admitted to be received into a state of entire favour with God, to be freed from all precedent guilt, to have all their sins remitted and blotted out, to be redeemed from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ, God's beloved Son.[x] That by constant exhortation to perseverance and progress in the faith and obedience (against all temptations, persecutions, and seductions), in St. Paul's words, *warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, they might present* (or *render*) *every man perfect in Christ Jesus*,[y] they did endeavour to preserve and retain men in this state; that when men, being overborne by temptation of the flesh or persecution of the world, or seduced by the cunning of false teachers, did decline, and were in danger of deserting the profession or practice agreeable to this state, they did labour zealously to reclaim, and resettle them therein; and that such having fallen from it of themselves, or having been (by reason of their scandalous and contagious practice) in way of censure and punishment removed from it, they were ready (upon their repentance sufficiently declared) to receive and restore them, reinstating them in their former condition, and remitting their offences: (*If any man*, saith St. Paul, *be prevented in a transgression, ye that are spiritual*, καταρτίζετε τὸν τειοῦτον, *restore* (re-establish, set in a right and entire state) *such an one in the spirit of weakness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted:*[z] and, *If any one doth not obey our words—mark such an one, and do not converse with him, that he may be ashamed: however, do not account him an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.*[a]) And more plainly, St. Paul enjoins the Corinthians to account a puhishment imposed upon a grievous offender suffi-

[w] Acts ii. 14, &c.; xx. 18, &c.

[x] Acts ii. 38; iii. 19; Col. i. 12, 13, &c.

[y] Rom. iv. 25; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Col. i. 18.

[z] Gal. vi. 1.

[a] 2 Thess. iii. 14.

cient; that they *should favour* (or indulge with, or forgive) *and comfort him lest he should be swallowed up with grief;*[b] that they should *confirm love toward him;* declaring, that what favour they should show in such cases, he should consent and comply with them therein. And he otherwhere tells us, that the power he had bestowed upon him by Christ, according to which he might, upon occasion, use persons severely, was for edification, and not for destruction;[c] that the extremest punishment inflicted (delivery to Satan, from whose dominion they were by entrance into Christ's kingdom freed) was for destruction of the flesh, *that the spirit might be saved in the day of judgment*, and that they *might learn not to blaspheme;*[d] intimating a restitution into this state by repentance. And lastly, whereas St. Paul advises Timothy not to *lay suddenly his hands upon any man, nor* (thereby) *to partake with other men's sins;*[e] he seems to intimate the practice of receiving offenders into full communion of the church, and re-admittance into this state, signified by that ceremonious action. Thus did the apostles use the power of the keys on one hand; opening, and admitting, and keeping within the state of grace. We also shall find them shutting and excluding from it, by refusing and rejecting such as were not worthy and well disposed for it; withdrawing the means of instruction and persuasion; not *casting their pearls to swine; shaking the dust off their feet, when men* (as it is in the Acts) *did thrust away the word of God, and did not judge themselves worthy of eternal life.*[f] We find also exercising authority upon such as were admitted; dealing severely with persons walking disorderly in any kind of lewd and vicious practice, disobeying their words and orders, making divisions and scandals, breathing false and bad doctrines, contrary to that which they had taught; such they enjoin Christians to decline from, and avoid all communion and conversation with them; such, as bad leaven, they command to be purged out from the Christian congregations, to be taken from among them, to be delivered up to Satan.[g] Thus did they shut the kingdom of heaven; and so, according to their example and order (as we should in reason suppose), did the governors of the Christian Church after them both open and shut it; opening it by baptism (which the Fathers sometime expressly call κλεὶς οὐρανῶν, *the key of heaven*), and receiving persons well instructed and well disposed into it;[h] opening it again by receiving persons who had been for heinous offences put out, upon due testification and reasonable assurance of their amendment and repentance; and shutting it upon persons unfit to enter, separating and excluding from it such as notoriously misbehaved themselves therein, to the dishonour, disturbance, and detriment of the church. I cannot insist upon particulars, nor stand to produce testimonies concerning them; let one clear passage (as to the latter part, *shutting*) out of Tertullian's Apologetic, wherein he declares the manner commonly practised in the Christian churches, suffice.[i] *Certe* (saith he) *fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus; disciplinam præceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus; ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, et censura divina; nam et judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conspectu summumque futuri judicii præjudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut a communicatione orationis, et conventus, et omnis sancti commercii relegetur.*

5. As for the rise and occasion of this power (beside the necessity and utility thereof which might cause it to be appointed), we may consider, that as all, or the greater part, institutions and ceremonies practised among Christians, as the frame of government in their churches, seem to have been drawn from, or according to, the pattern of God's ancient church (Christianity not affecting novelty or difference from that, but so far as consisted with its main design of reforming men's minds, and promoting the spiritual service of God, and suited with reason or expediency, endeavouring conformity to it, and resemblance thereof;

[b] 2 Cor. ii. 7, 8, 10. [c] 2 Cor. xiii. 10.
[d] 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20.
[e] 1 Tim. v. 22.
[f] Εὔθετος εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ,—Luke ix. 62; Matt. vii. 6; Acts xiii. 46, 51; xviii. 6.

[g] Rom. xvi. 17, &c.; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 Cor. v. 7; ii. 11. [h] Bas. Naz. &c.
[i] Cap. 38.

so it seems our Saviour, in this particular, did but accommodate and vest in the governors of his church a power used in that of the Jews; for we shall find this power in its several parts not only represented in type, but expressed in direct and real practice. We see that the Jewish church was opened to proselytes by circumcision, by washing, by expiatory sacrifices; that unclean and leprous persons were excluded from the camp and congregation, prohibited contest and conversation, that they might not annoy or infect those which were pure and sound;[j] that upon their recovery and purification they were restored to society and conversation; that that church was wholly shut upon enormous offenders (such who could not be kept in order, who presumptuously neglected some great duty, or violated some great commandment, who disgraced the religion by scandalous practice, or disturbed the peace by contumacious carriage, refusing to hear the judge and the priest;) that, I say, such persons were quite shut out by total extermination and excision. We find also several degrees of ecclesiastical censure (answerable to the degrees of offence) practised among them, alluded to in the New Testament; separating from communion and converse, exclusion from the synagogue, anathematizing or imprecating, and devoting to God's judgment:[k] the practice of which things being grounded in reason, and suitable to the state of the Christian church (as well as to that of the Jews), and conducible to the welfare thereof, it is no wonder a power of doing the like was granted unto the Christian church, and exercised by the superintendency thereof. But these things I cannot stand to pursue minutely and distinctly.

I should, lastly, consider the necessity and usefulness of this power; how necessary and conducible it is to promote the ends of Christian religion; to preserve the honour of the church and of its governors; to secure the members thereof from contagion of bad manners and influences of bad example; to maintain good order and peace; to restrain from offending, and reform them that shall offend; and to the like purposes. But I shall leave this point to your further consideration.

[j] Levit. xiii. xiv; Numb. v. 2.

[k] *Vide* Ez. x. 8; Luke. vi. 22; John xi. 22; xii. 42; Gal. i. 8, 9, &c.

The forgiveness of Sins; the Resurrection of the Body; the Life everlasting.

That it is the natural condition of mankind to lie under a violent proclivity (or rather an unavoidable necessity) of frequently transgressing the plainest dictates of reason, the surest rules of equity, however fortified by the authority of God himself, commanding and requiring duty, promising reward, and threatening punishment, continual experience shows; that hereby men do not only much disgrace and abuse themselves (doing against the dignity of their nature and their own particular welfare), but highly injure, dishonour, and ill requite God (their Maker, their natural Lord, their Benefactor, from whom they have received their being, under whose power they wholly are, to whom they owe all their good, and consequently to whom all obedience, respect, and gratitude is due from them), is also manifest;[l] their own consciences will tell them so much; their own reason will therefore condemn them: that hereby they are involved in a state of guilt and debt, become obnoxious to the just wrath and vengeance of God, beyond all possibility of making (by themselves) any reparation or satisfaction[m] (for they are more apt to incur new, than able to make amends for old, blame: to accumulate more than to discharge foregoing debts;) that hence they must fall into a condition of restless fear and inextricable perplexity of mind, dreading the effects of divine justice and vengeance sometimes to come upon them; that there cannot in reality be any other relief or deliverance from this distress than from the benignity of God disposing him to bear patiently, to forgive mercifully these offences; not in their apprehension any such relief (any freedom from such discomfort and anxiety), than from a plain signification of God's being so graciously disposed, is also clear from the same light. Now of such a disposition in God (to be ap-

[l] Deut. xxxii. 6. [m] ὑπόδικοι. Rom. v. 19.

peased and to pardon offences) we find a general presumption among those who have had any knowledge or opinion concerning God,* (drawn, I suppose, partly from primitive tradition, partly from experience of God's forbearance to punish and continuance to bestow the common benefits of Providence upon offenders, partly from an opinion that bounty and clemency are perfections and excellencies worthy of God; or, lastly, from a natural inclination in men (necessary to that quiet and comfort of their minds) to flatter themselves with pleasing hopes;) we find, I say, such a general presumption concerning God's disposition to be reconcilable and merciful to offenders, especially upon their acknowledgment of guilt and need of favour, together with a declaration of their willingness to make him such amends as they are able to do: such a presumption to have been, that universal custom of presenting sacrifices and obligations to God doth sufficiently shew; which implied in them who presented them a confession of guilt to be expiated, of punisnment to be deserved (such as was represented in the destruction of a living creature), as also a desire of making satisfaction (intimated by their cheerful parting with somewhat dear and valuable to them;) upon which considerations of humble acknowledgment, of willingness to satisfy in a manner so signal and solemn, declared they did hope God's wrath would be appeased, and his judgments averted from them. Such, it seems, was the common presumption of mankind; which yet could not satisfy or quiet the minds of them who should consider, that as such performances could not really take away guilt, nor sufficiently repair those inestimable wrongs and affronts put upon God, so God had never plainly declared his intention to consider or accept them; so that in effect their opinion was somewhat unreasonable, and their hope groundless. This observation I propound, as yielding a good argument (the general consent of mankind) to prove that the doctrine (concerning remission of sins obtainable from God) is a fundamental point and a principal part of all religion, and that yet (as to any solid and certain ground of believing or hoping it) it is peculiar to Christian religion, God never before the revelation (evangelical) having clearly and fully signified that he would pardon offences (at least all of them, heinous and presumptive offences) committed against him. What God would have done he had taught partly by a natural law and light implanted in every man's soul, partly by express promulgation made to the patriarchs of old, and derived to posterity from them by tradition;[n] how men in respect thereto behaved themselves, their conscience (*accusing or excusing them*) could testify; but how, in case of transgressing those dictates and laws, he would deal with them, he never plainly had discovered.[o] Indeed the Jewish dispensation (which was particular and preparatory to Christianity) did appoint and accept expiations for some lesser faults committed out of ignorance and infirmity;[p] but did not pretend to justify from all things (as St. Paul in the Acts speaks), nor promise or give hope of pardon upon any terms of great presumptuous sins committed wilfully with a high hand;[q] it rather threatens an indellible continuance of guilt upon an extreme and inevitable vengeance against the perpetrators of them; *The soul* (saith the Law) *that doth presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall be utterly cut off*[r] (by God's special providence;) *his iniquity shall be upon him.* And we know how solemn and dreadful imprecations were pronounced against not only the transgressors of some particular laws, but generally against all those who did *not continue in all things written in the Law to do them:* so that the remission tendered by Moses was of a very narrow extent, and such as could hardly exempt any man from obligation to and fear of punishment.[s] Indeed, to prevent utter despair, and that which is naturally consequent thereupon, a total neglect of duty, God was pleased by his prophets

* Testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ.—*Tert.*

[n] Rom. ii.
[o] Gal. iii.
[p] Numb. xv. 27, &c.
[q] Acts xiii. 38.
[r] Numb. xv. 30, 31.
[s] Deut. xxviii. 26; Gal. iii. 10.

among that people occasionally to intimate something of further grace reserved; and that he was willing (upon condition of humble and sincere repentance) to receive even those, who were guilty of the highest offences, to mercy. But these discoveries, as they were special and extraordinary, so were they further preparatory to the gospel, and as dawnings to that bright day of grace, which did by Christ spread its comfortable light over the world, revealing to mankind a general capacity of God's favour (procured in a manner admirable and strange), obtainable by means declared, upon terms propounded therein.[t]

Thereby is fully and clearly manifested to us how God, in free mercy and pity to us (all our works being unworthy of any acceptance, all our sacrifices unfit in the least part to satisfy for our offences), was pleased himself to provide an obedience worthy of his acceptance, and thoroughly well-pleasing to him (imputable to us as performed by one of our kind and race, and apt to appease God's just wrath against such a generation of rebels;) to provide a sacrifice in nature so pure, in value so precious, as might be perfectly satisfactory for our offences: in regard to which obedience God is become reconciled, and opens his arms of grace to mankind; in respect to which sacrifice he tenders remission to all men that upon his terms (most equal and easy terms) are willing to embrace it. This is the great doctrine, so peculiar to the gospel, from whence especially it hath its name, from whence it is styled the *gospel of grace*;[u] this is the *good tidings of great joy to all people*,[v] which the angel first preached at our Saviour's birth, which the apostles were ordained *to preach and testify unto all nations*, as the main point of Christian religion (that in our Saviour's name *repentance and remission of sins should be preached unto all nations*;[w]) that God had *exalted him to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins*[x] (to give repentance, that is, to give μετανοίας τόπον, i. e. a room for repentance in order to mercy, to make it acceptable and available for the remission of sins.[y]) *God* (saith St. Paul) *did conclude all men under disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all: All men have sinned, and are come short of the glory of God: But we are justified freely by his grace, by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath propounded a propitiatory, by faith in his blood, for the demonstration of his righteousness, toward the forgiveness of forepast offences.*[z] In which words of St. Paul all things concerning the subject of our present discourse are expressed or implied: the nature of it (freeing us from guilt, and rendering us just in God's sight); the causes whence it sprang; the external impulsive in respect of God, or occasion thereof, our necessity and misery; the internal impulsive, God's grace and free goodness: also the meritorious cause procuring it (our Saviour's obedience and suffering, whereby he did make atonement for our sins;) the ends whither it tends (the demonstration of God's goodness and his justice, or of his merciful justice, signified by the word δικαιοσύνη:) the terms and condition, upon compliance with or performance of which the effect of it should follow, (faith; that is, a sincere embracement or hearty persuasion concerning the truth of that doctrine or revelation which offered it, implying also a firm resolution to submit to the yoke of Christ, and obey his righteous laws;) lastly, the means of conveying, declaring, and confirming it (implied by the words, πάρεσις προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων, the remission of forepast sins; such as was solemnly exhibited, signified, ratified in the church ministries of baptism, absolution, and reconciliation, upon penance and confession, especially the first.) These things I cannot insist upon particularly or distinctly, nor do much need to do so, having had occasion to consider most of them formerly in these discourses, especially when we spake concerning the salvation procured by Jesus, the sacerdotal office of Christ, the death and passion of our Saviour. I shall therefore only now briefly touch (that which seems here specially referred to) the or-

[t] Luke i. 77, 78; 2 Cor. vi. 2.
[u] *Vide* Luke i. 77; Acts xx. 24.
[v] Luke ii. 10.
[w] Luke xxiv. 47, 48.
[x] Acts v. 31.
[y] Heb. xii. 17; Acts xiii. 38; 1 John ii. 12.
[z] Rom. xi. 32; Gal. iii. 22; Rom. iii. 4, 5, &c.

dinary manner of conveying this great grace to men by the ministry of the church. To which purpose we may consider, that although it be true that God generally propounds remission of sins (upon account of our Saviour's performances and in his name) to *all that truly repent and turn unto him*, that he chiefly grants it upon this consideration, nor withholds it from any upon the blameless default of any other performance;[a] yet he requires (and to comply with his will therein is part of duty, which the repentance mentioned disposes to and is declared by), God requires, I say (as well for the public edification and the honour of the church, as for the comfort and advantage of the persons more immediately concerned herein), that this repentance,

1. Be publicly declared and approved by the church; that this remission be solemnly and formally imparted by the hands of God's ministers, declared by express words, or ratified by certain seals, and signified by mysterious representations appointed by God. Thus hath every man (upon declaration of his real faith and repentance, to the satisfaction of the church) being admitted to baptism, the entire forgiveness of his sins, and reception into God's favour, consigned unto him therein, confirmed and represented by a visible sign;[b] shewing, that as by water the body is washed and cleansed from adherent filth, so by the grace then imparted the souls of them, upon whom that mystical rite is performed, are cleared from the guilts that stained it, *their sins are wiped out*[c] (it is St. Peter's expression in the Acts), *their hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience* (as it is in the Epistle to the Hebrews), *they are saved*[d] (or put into a state of salvation, as St. Peter assures us.)

2. Likewise, if Christian men having fallen into sin, or failed of duty toward God, do seriously confess their fault, and heartily repent thereof; when the ministers of the church, in God's name and for Christ's sake, do declare (or pronounce) to them so doing or so qualified the pardon of their sin, and absolve them from it; we need not doubt that their sins are really forgiven, and the pardon expressed in words is effectually dispensed unto them.

3. Moreover, if persons having committed notorious enormities, adjudged of a deadly and destructive nature (*sins unto death*,[e] St. John calls them), inconsistent with the state of grace, and scandalous to the Christian profession, are therefore justly secluded from communion of the church; when upon submission to the penances enjoined, and satisfactory demonstrations of repentance, they are resumed into the bosom of the church, we may be assured that (according to the catholic resolution against the Novatians), supposing the repentance true and real, their sins are remitted, and they restored to a state of grace. For since God hath expressly declared, that if the *wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all God's statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him—he shall save his soul alive—iniquity shall not be his ruin*:[f] that if we *wash ourselves, and make ourselves clean, and put away the evil of our doings from God's eyes, and cease to do evil—though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool*:[g] since God *delights not in the death of any sinner, but rather desires that all men should be saved*:[h] since our Saviour intimates the satisfaction he hath in *finding the sheep* that had erred from his fold, and God is so highly pleased with the *return of a prodigal son* (that had spent abroad all his sustenance in riot) *home to his house*:[i] since our Saviour's performances are in value and virtue sufficient to expiate for the greatest offences, to redeem the most grievous sinners; *so that if any man sin, he hath* upon due repentance, *an advocate with the Father*;[j] since the design of such punishments inflicted upon offenders respects edification, not destruction, and procures the ruin of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved:[k] these things,

[a] Acts xxvi. 20; iii. 19.
[b] Acts ii. 38; iii. 19.
[c] Acts iii. 19.
[d] Heb. x. 22; 1 Pet. iii. 21.
[e] 1 John v. 16.
[f] Ezek. xviii. 21, 22, 27, 30.
[g] Isa. i. 16, 17, 18.
[h] Ezek. xxxiii. 11.
[i] Matt. xviii. 13; Luke xv.
[j] 1 John ii. 2.
[k] 1 Cor. xiii. 10; v. 5.

I say, being considered, the church (to which the public and ordinary dispensation of God's grace, according to the dispositions and conditions which he hath declared to require in order to men's becoming capable thereof, is committed) hath sufficient warrant to receive such persons into a state of grace and reconciliation with God; so that we need not doubt, but *whose sins they* shall thus *remit*, *shall* in effect (according to our Saviour's word) *be remitted; whom they* shall thus *absolve on earth*, they *shall be absolved in heaven.*[l] But these things I have formerly touched in discoursing upon the Power of the Keys; I shall only add a few words concerning the use and practical influence of this point, being believed and considered, should have upon us. And,

1. It should engage us to admire the goodness of God, and with grateful hearts to praise him for it. If we should offer the highest injuries, affronts, and despites to the majesty of an earthly prince among us (so infinitely inferior to that of God), we should have reason to admire his goodness and clemency, did he pass them over; did he not with extreme severity avenge them. There can be no higher than those we have offered to Almighty God (none capable in any comparison of such aggravations:) how unexpressibly great, therefore, is his goodness, that freely offers us pardon; that earnestly invites and intreats us to accept it; that hath been at such an expense, and condescended so low, to purchase for us the means thereof! It is ὑπερβάλλουσα χάρις, an excessive grace of God; ὑπερβάλλων πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος, an excessive riches of grace; ἀνεκδιήγητος δωρεὰ (*an unutterable gift*) of God, as St. Paul speaketh.[m] Let us consider our state, and the nature of God, with the aggravations of our offences grounded on them, and we shall in some measure perceive it so, and what thankfulness we are consequently obliged to render.

2. It should beget in us, as grateful respect, so ardent love to God, in proportion to the favour we have received. It was his love that moved him to forgive us our sins (*God, being rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, did quicken us with Christ, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*[n]) And to this love of pity in God should answer a love of reverence in us toward so gracious a Lord. Our Saviour, you know, propounds the question to St. Peter concerning two debtors, of whom one did owe fifty, the other five hundred pence; and both being forgiven by the creditor, *whom he thought of the two should love him most:*[o] he answers, according to the plain dictate of nature, *he to whom most was forgiven;* and our Saviour approves his answer with an Ὀρθῶς ἔκρινας, *Thou hast judged rightly:* and the holy penitent (Mary Magdalene), *because many sins were forgiven her, therefore did love much.* So doth reason and example oblige us to do.

3. It affords matter of comfort to us; a comfortable sense of mercy conferred, a comfortable hope of mercy to be obtained: *Blessed is he* (saith the Psalmist) *whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is pardoned; blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity:*[p] *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.*[q] All good Christians are in this blessed state, and many enjoy a delightful satisfaction in reflecting thereupon, able to support them against all other occasions of sorrow or displeasure that may befall them; and it will fortify us against despair, to consider, that however God hath been offended by our sins, he will be appeased by our repentance; so that our sins shall be blotted out and vanish as a thick cloud, which passing away leaves a serene sky behind it: *If any man sin, we have an advocate,*[r] &c.

4. It is also an engagement to obedience: *Behold* (said our Saviour to the diseased man) *thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee.*[s] Having obtained a cure and state of health by God's grace, we by relapsing into sin expose ourselves to greater danger, we incur deeper guilt. Our state, though not wholly desperate, becomes very perilous. It is better continuing in the ship, than committing our safety to a plank.*

[l] John xxix. 23; Matt. xviii. 18.
[m] 2 Cor. ix. 14; Eph. ii. 7; 2 Cor. ix. 15.

* Pœnitentia tabula post naufragium.—*Tertull.*

[n] Eph. ii. 4, 5.
[o] Luke vii. 41. 43, 47.
[p] Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.
[q] Rom. v. 1.
[r] Isa. xliv. 22; 1 John ii. 1.
[s] John v. 14.

5. Lastly, the consideration of this point will show us how much we are obliged (in conformity and compliance with God) to bear with and forgive the offences or injuries done against us. You know how strongly our Saviour presses the consideration of God's free pardon bestowed on us to this purpose; how he sets out the unreasonableness and disingenuity of them which are *hard-hearted toward their brethern and fellow-servants in this case*;[t] how he threatens unavoidable severity toward those who *do not from their hearts forgive their brethren their trespasses*, and promises remission of sins *to them who* (according to what they in their prayers profess themselves to do) *shall forgive to men the offences committed against them*;[u] making it not only an indispensable condition, but, as it were, a means of obtaining God's mercy and favour. But I leave it to your meditation to make further profitable deduction from this point. So I proceed:

The Resurrection of the Body.

Τῆς σαρκὸς, of the flesh, it is in Greek: which comes to the same. The immortality or surviving of the soul after death (as being a foundation of receiving reward and punishment for men's deeds in this life) hath been in all religions (except, perchance, that of the ancient Jews: but they afterwards found it necessary to suppose this point—when they found the most pious obnoxious to greatest affliction, which propounded great rewards and punishments in this life, assuring that Providence which dispensed them, by sensible experiments;[v]) hath been, I say, almost in all religions deemed a necessary principle, as the most potent excitement to virtue, the most powerful determent from wickedness, the most satisfactory ground of resolving difficulties concerning the nature and providence of God; which general consent (running through all ancient religions), according to that of Cicero, *Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium*,[w] argueth it not only agreeable to common reason, but deduced from original tradition; without which (considering the variable dispositions and capacities of mankind (it is hard to conceive so many nations should unanimously conspire in an opinion of that nature (so removed from sense) however reasonable. Indeed the philosophers, men affecting to soar above the pitch of vulgar apprehension, and who, perceiving the great superstition and vanity immixed with common religions (as they had been by fraud and folly corrupted, and become degenerate from primitve tradition), did not scruple to call any thing delivered in them to question, and to determine about them according to reasons offering themselves, did differ herein; yet so as scarce any who acknowledged a Divinity, which (having made and governing the world, and to whom, therefore, reverence and service from men was due) did not approve and assert it; as indeed they must needs do in consonance to their opinion concerning God, all arguments upon which religion is built, inferring it; which they did endeavour further to confirm by reasons drawn from the nature of man, which you may see collected and elegantly urged by Cicero in the first of his Tusculan Questions: which arguments yet we may perceive had not so great an efficacy either upon him or upon Socrates himself (the first great promoter of this doctrine, as deducible from reason), that they were thoroughly confident of its truth, and freed from all doubt concerning it. The certainty thereof we owe to Christianity alone, and to his instruction *who brought life and immortality* (that is, immortal life) *to light*:[x] it plainly teaches us, that when we die, we shall not wholly perish like brute beasts (or other natural bodies, when they are dissolved;) that our souls do not vanish into nothing, nor are resolved into invisible principles; but return into God's hand, and the place by him appointed for them, there continuing in that life which is proper to a soul. This Christianity teacheth us; and not only so, but further, that our bodies themselves shall be raised again out of their dust and corruption, and our souls shall be reunited to them, and our persons restored to their perfect integrity of nature: the bringing

[t] Matt. xviii. 6.
[u] Matt. xviii. 35; vi. 14.
[v] *Vide* Maccab.
[w] Tusc. 1.
[x] 2 Tim. i. 10.

of which effects to pass by the divine power, is called most commonly *the resurrection of the dead* (or *from the dead*, ἐκ νεκρῶν,) and simply *the resurrection;* sometimes, *the regeneration* (or iterated nativity), and *being born from the dead;* which names plainly imply a respect to the body and to the person of a man, as constituted of body and soul: the mere permanency of our souls in being and life could not be called (with any propriety or truth) *a resurrection:*[y] that which never had fallen could not be said to be raised up; that which did never die could not be restored from death; nor could men be said to rise again, but in respect to that part, or that state, which had fallen, and ceased to be: and as to be *born at first* signifies the production and union of the parts essential to a man, body and soul; so to be *born again* implies the restitution and reunion of the same; a man becoming thereby the same entire person which he was before. The same is also sometimes signified in terms more formal and express: *the quickening of the dead; the vivification of our mortal bodies; the redemption of our body; this corruptible* (τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο, this very same corruptible) *putting on immortality; those which are in the graves hearing Christ's voice and proceeding forth to the resurrection of life or judgment;*[z] *the awaking of them which sleep in the dust of the earth; the sea, the death, the hell* (or universal grave) *yielding up their dead:*[a] which expressions, and the like, occurring, most clearly and fully prove the restitution of the body, and its reunion with the soul, and the person becoming in substance completely the same that he was; which truth, of all perhaps which Christianity revealed, as most new and strange, was the hardliest received, and found most opposition among the heathens, especially philosophers: *Hearing the resurrection of the dead, some of them mocked; others said, We will hear thee again about this:*[b] so was St. Paul's discourse entertained among the Athenians: some derided it, as (it seems) conceiving it a thing altogether impossible, or very improbable to happen;[c] they did not see how it could, why it should be done; (as Pliny, somewhere counting the revolution of the dead to life a thing impossible to be performed, otherwhere a childish foppery to suppose it.[d]) But why it should be impossible to the divine power, no good reason can be assigned. To recollect the dispersed parts of a man's body; to dispose them into their due order; to reduce them unto a temper fit to serve vital functions; to rejoin the soul unto the body so restored; why should it be impossible, why seem hard to him who first framed and tempered our body out of the dust, and inspired the soul into it? yea to him, who out of mere confusion digested the whole world into so wonderful an order and harmony; to him that into a dead lump of earth inserted such varieties of life; that from seeds buried in the ground, and corrupted there, causes such goodly plants to spring forth; that hath made all nature to subsist by continual vicissitudes of life and death;[e] every morning (as it were) and every spring representing a general resurrection? [*Ah Lord God!* saith the prophet Jeremiah, *thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee:*[f] too hard for omniscient wisdom to contrive, for omnipotent strength to execute.] And what difficulties soever fancy may suggest, can we doubt of that to be possible which experience shews us to be done? Let that passage in the prophet Ezekiel suffice, concerning very dry bones scattered about in an open field, which at God's word came together, and united in order;[g] the sinews and the flesh coming upon them, and the skin covering them; and lastly, breath coming into them, so that they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army: whether we suppose it to be a parable or a history, to relate to the last resurrection or not, implies yet a possibility of such a resurrection, and yields a lively resemblance thereof:

[y] ἐγείρειν, Heb. xi. 19; ἀναγαγεῖν, Heb. xiii. 20; Matt. xix. 28; Col. i. 18; Rev. i.

[z] Rom. iv. 17; viii. 11, 23; 2 Cor. v. 2, &c; 1 Cor. xv. 53.

[a] John v. 28; Dan. xii. 2; Rev. xx. 13.

[b] Acts xvii. 32.

[c] *Vide* Orig. c. Cels. 1.

[d] Nat. Hist. ii. 7; vii. 55; Puerile deliramentum.

[e] 1 Cor. xv. 36, &c.

[f] Jer. xxxii. 17.

[g] Ezek. xxxvii. 1, &c.

but more plainly do many instances of particular resurrections, for the confirmation of our faith, recorded in scripture: *Women* (saith the author to the Hebrews) *received their dead by resurrection;* relating to the widow of Sarepta's child, who, by Elias's prayer, did revive;[h] and the Shunamite's child raised by Elisha;[i] to which might be added the man, who being let down into Elisha's sepulchre, and touching the bones of that prophet, did revive and stand upon his feet:[j] and in the New Testament we have likewise divers examples of persons by our Saviour raised and restored from death to life: Jairus's daughter, the young man of Nain, Lazarus[k] (who had been four days dead, in which time bodies come to putrify and smell); and more remarkably, it is said in St. Matthew's Gospel, that at our Saviour's death *many tombs were opened, and many bodies of saints that had departed rose, and coming out of the tombs* (after our Saviour's resurrection) *entered into the holy city, and did appear to many* (or publicly;[l]) a clear and full experiment of a miraculous resurrection, like to that we believe; but above all, our Saviour's resurrection may confirm our faith herein, it being designed to that purpose; πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν, *God holding forth* (saith St. Paul) *a convincing argument to all of the resurrection* (and other appendant verities taught in the gospel), *raising him up from the dead:*[m] *And if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some that there is no resurrection of the dead?*[n] How can any man deny that to be possible, which is so really exemplified? Nay, how can we doubt that we shall follow, when we see him going before, as the *Captain of life*, as *our forerunner*, as *the first-fruits of them that sleep*, and *first-born from the dead*, as that second Adam, whom it is congruous that we should all conform to in the restitution of our nature, as we did to the first Adam in the decay thereof;[o] that we should live by him as we died by the other; and bear the image of the heavenly immortal man, as we did that of the earthly and mortal one? Neither (as not impossible so) can this resurrection be showed improbable, or implausible, but rather very consonant to the reason of the thing. Man, according to original design and frame, doth consist of soul and body; those parts have a natural relation, an aptitude, and an appetite (it seems by their unwillingness to part) to cohabit, communicate, and co-operate with each other: many actions very proper to man's nature cannot be performed without their conjunctions, concurrence, many capacities of joy and comfort (with their contraries) result thence: the separation of them we see how violent and repugnant it is to nature; and we are taught that it is penal, and a consequent of sin; and therefore cannot be good and perfect. No wonder, then, that God, designing to restore man to his ancient integrity, and more (to a higher perfection), to reward him with all the felicity his nature is capable of (on one hand, I mean; as on the other hand to punish and afflict him according to his demerit), should raise the body, and rejoin it to the soul, that it might contribute its natural subserviency to such enjoyments and sufferings respectively: not to omit the congruity in justice, that the bodies which did partake in works of obedience and holiness, or of disobedience and profaneness (which, in St. Paul's language, were either slaves to impurity and iniquity, or *servants of righteousness unto sanctification*), should also partake in suitable recompenses; that the body which endured grievous pains for righteousness should enjoy comfortable refreshments; that which wallowed in unlawful pleasures should undergo just torments.[p]

I omit (the time so requiring) many considerations pertinent to this purpose; I shall only add, what we further learn in scripture (which also the reason of the thing would teach us) concerning this point, that as the bodies of men shall be raised the same in substance, so they shall be much altered in quality: for whereas, according to their present temper and frame, our bodies are frail and weak, apt by every small impression upon them to be broken or impaired, needing continual reparation, and, notwithstanding all

[h] Heb. xi. 35; 1 Kings xvii. 23.
[i] 2 Kings iv. 36. [j] 2 Kings xiii. 21.
[k] John xi. 39. [l] Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.
[m] Acts xvii. 32. [n] 1 Cor. xv. 12.
[o] Heb. ii. 10; vi. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23; Col. i. 18.

[p] Rom. vi. 19; Tertul. Apol. &c.

means used to preserve them, growing to decay and dissolution; and whereas they are destinated, after their resurrection, to a continual abiding in joy or pain, it is necessary they should be so changed, as that they may be fit, without decay, to enjoy those everlasting comforts; able, without dissolution, to undergo those endless pains: and particularly, further, whereas the body here doth clog the soul, doth excite troublesome passions, doth incline to sensual desire, doth require much care to preserve and please it; such things being inconsistent with, or prejudicial to, that state of spiritual rest and joy which good men are destined to; a change must needs be made therein, preventive of such inconveniences; *For* (as St. Paul saith) *flesh and blood* (a body so brittle and passable, so apt to be affected by, so addicted to, sensible goods) *cannot enter into the kingdom of God;*[q] *nor can corruption inherit incorruption; but this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; the dead must be raised incorruptible;*[r] there must be a very sudden mutation (so St. Paul in several places expressly tells us), a metamorphosis into a resemblance with Christ's glory; *a transfiguration of our vile body into conformity with his glorious body: Our body is sown in corruption, it shall be raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual.*[s] But so much concerning the resurrection: I proceed to that which follows thereupon.

Life everlasting.

The immediate consequent of the resurrection, common to just and unjust, is (as we have it in the catalogue of fundamental doctrines, set down by the Apostle to the Hebrews) κρίμα αἰώνιον, that judgment or doom, by which the eternal state of every person is determined;[t] accordingly, *every man must bear the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*[u] Now this state, generally taken (as respecting both the righteous and blessed, the wicked and miserable), as it doth suppose a perpetual duration in being and sense, so it may be called *everlasting life;* although life (as being commonly apprehended a principal good, and all men having naturally a strong desire to preserve it; with reference also, perhaps, to the phrases used under the law, wherein continuance in life is proposed as a reward to the obedient, and death threatened to transgressors) is used to denote peculiarly the blessed state;[v] as death (the most extreme of legal punishments, and most abominable to nature) is also used to signify the condition of the damned; *the resurrection of life*, and *resurrection of damnation; everlasting life*, and *everlasting punishment* (*shame and everlasting contempt*,[w]) being opposed; although, I say, life be commonly thus taken (as is also the resurrection sometimes for that which belongs only to the righteous, transmitting them into happiness), yet the reason of the thing requires that here we understand it generally, so as to comprehend both states (both being matters of faith equally necessary, as it were, and of like fundamental consequence;) both yielding both the highest encouragements to a good, and determents from a bad life: for, as on the one hand, what can excite us more to the performance of duty, than so happy a state; a state of highest dignity and glory, of sweetest comfort and joy;[x] of joy full in measure, pure in quality, perpetual in duration, perfect in all respects to the utmost capacity of our nature; wherein all our parts and faculties shall be raised to their highest pitch of perfection, our bodies become free from all corruptibility and decay, all weakness and disease, all grossness, unwieldiness, defilement, and deformity, shall be rendered incorruptible, glorious, and spiritual;[y] our souls in their nature perfected, in their inclinations rectified, in their appetites satisfied;[z] the understanding being full of light, clear and distinct in knowledge of

[q] 1 Cor. xv. 50. [r] 1 Cor. xv. 53, 52.
[s] 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16, 17; 2 Cor. iii. 18; Phil. iii. 21; *vide* 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.
[t] Heb. vi. 2. [u] 2 Cor. v. 10.
[v] *Vide* Deut. v. ult.
[w] John v. 29; Matt. xxv. 45; Dan. xii. 2; Phil. iii. 11; Luke xx. 35.
[x] Psal. xvi. 11.
[y] 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44; 2 Cor. iii. 18; Phil. iii. 21. [z] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

truth, free from error and ignorance; the will steadily inclined to good, ready to comply with God's will, free from all perverseness and weakness; our affections set in right order and frame, with constant regularity tending to that which is truly good, and taking full delight therein: wherein we shall enjoy the blissful presence and sight of God, smiling in love and favour upon us, of our gracious Redeemer, of the holy angels, of the just made perfect;[a] whose company and conversation, how unconceivably sweet and delightful must it be! wherein nothing adverse or troublesome can befall us; no unpleasant or offensive object present itself to us; no want, or need of any thing; no care, or fear, or suspicion; no labour or toil, no sorrow or pain, no regret or distaste, no stir or contention, no listlessness or satiety: *God will wipe* (as it is in the Apocalypse) *every tear from their eyes;*[b] and death shall be no more, nor sorrow, nor clamour (or complaint), nor pain any more: in fine, a state surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it, of which the highest splendours and choicest pleasures here are but obscure shadows (do yield but faint and imperfect resemblances;) comparable to which, *no eye hath seen, no ear hath heard, nor hath it ascended into any heart to conceive the like* (as St. Paul out of the prophet Isaiah tells us;[c]) the firm belief, I say, and careful consideration of the certainty, by a pious and holy life, of acquiring right unto and possession of such a state, must needs be the greatest excitement possible thereto; as must the loss and falling short thereof be of mighty efficacy to withdraw us from impiety: as on this hand, so on the other hand, the being persuaded, that by neglecting our duty, and transgressing God's law, we shall certainly incur intolerable pains and miseries, without ease or respite, without hope or remedy, without any end; that we shall for ever not only be secluded from God's presence and favour, be deprived of all rest, comfort, and joy; but detruded into utmost wretchedness; a state more dark and dismal, more forlorn and disconsolate, than we can imagine; which not the sharpest pain of body, not the bitterest anxiety of mind, any of us ever felt, can in any measure represent; wherein our bodies shall be afflicted continually with a sulphureous flame, not scorching the skin only, but piercing the inmost sinews; our souls incessantly bit and gnawed upon by a worm (the worm of bitter remorse for our wretched perverseness and folly; of horrid despair ever to get out of this sad estate;) under which vexations unexpressible, always enduring pangs of death, always dying, we shall never die: this persuasion, I say, must needs most effectually deter us from those courses of impiety which certainly lead to so miserable a condition. If it cannot, what can do it? We must, beyond all impression that any reason can make upon us, be irrecoverably stupid or obstinate; infinitely careless of our own good, bent to our ruin. But these things the time will not permit me further to dilate upon; and I did formerly (in treating upon our Saviour's coming to judgment) somewhat largely press considerations of this nature. I shall only, therefore, conclude with a prayer to Almighty God, that, according to his infinite mercy, he, by his gracious assistance leading us in the ways of piety and obedience, would bring us into everlasting life and happiness; withdrawing us from impiety and iniquity, would deliver us from eternal death and misery: to whom be all praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

[a] 1 John iii. 2; Heb. xii. 22.
[b] Rev. iii. 4.
[c] 1 Cor. ii. 9; Isa. lxiv. 4.

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